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CONGRESS, as we go to press, is within a few hours of adjournment, with a veto of the Muscle Shoals bill momentarily expected, and with the fate of the Wagner employment-exchange bill at the President's hands in doubt. With all routine legislation out of the way, and with the veterans'-loan measure overwhelmingly passed over the President's veto, the Vestal copyright bill, pending in the Senate, and the lame-duck Congress measure, deadlocked between House and Senate, are among the measures of importance likely to be lost in the last-hour jam. Senator Norris, not without humor, sent the President word that he would resign if the President would sign the Muscle Shoals bill, induce his House followers to yield on the lame-duck measure, and appoint the Nebraskan chairman of the Muscle Shoals board with power to choose his colleagues. The President's veto of the Senator's offer will doubtless be tinged with regret. A hope for better things in the new Congress may be seen in the conference of Progressives summoned for March 11-12 to consider a legislative program. The subjects specified are unemployment and industrial stabilization, public utilities, agriculture, the tariff, and the return to representative government. The call is signed by Senators Norris, Cutting, La Follette, and Wheeler, and Senator-elect Costigan, and Governors Roosevelt, Pinchot, La Follette, Olson, and Meier are among those invited. If the progressives can agree on a well-considered legislative program, they may make the new Congress a notable one.

THE REAL PURPOSE of the European grain conferences held at Paris, according to the semi-official *Temps*, was to extend a larger measure of political stability to the Eastern European states. Called nominally to consider disposal of the 1930 surplus and future surpluses of the so-called Danubian grain-producing countries — Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Jugoslavia — the conferences actually faced the economic danger of agricultural bankruptcy in those states, which among them are reported to be carrying a farm debt of nearly $1,200,000,000, and the political danger that the countries may fall into the lap of Russia. The proposals put forward were for some kind of European agreement to absorb the grain surplus of the Danubian states, and the establishment of an agricultural loan bank under the auspices of the League of Nations for the purpose of fortifying their agriculture and at the same time "strengthening their military position so as to be better able to overcome communistic tendencies," according to a frank dispatch in the New York *Times*. With none of the leading exporters—Russia, Canada, the United States, and Argentina —represented at these conferences, and with Great Britain and even France itself professing inability for special reasons to bind themselves to take any of the current year's Danubian surplus, it is not strange that the practical economic results were rather less than negligible.

THE ECONOMIC POSITION of the Danubian wheat-growers is impossible. According to figures presented at Paris, world wheat shipments to Europe from August 1 to February 19 last reached the large total of 354,000,000 bushels, of which Russia furnished nearly 86,000,000, and it is estimated that Russia's exports may reach double that amount in 1931-32. In addition, Canada, the United States, and Argentina, always heavy exporters, have unusually large stocks on hand, the greater part of which is ultimately destined for the European market. The Federal Farm Board, to the dismay and, it is reported, the anger of the Paris delegates, has announced its purpose to sell abroad during the next four months up to 35,000,000 bushels of the huge stocks that it holds—which plan the Europeans unkindly compare with Russian "dumping." The board's action may well be only the first step in getting out of the impossible situation in which its disastrous efforts to keep up prices have placed it, and no disclaimers can prevent the inevitable effect on prices if the board does decide actually to liquidate its holdings. Add to all these difficulties the fact that Danubian wheat is of lower milling quality than the best of the Russian and overseas supplies, and the further fact that the European importers, whatever their political sympathies, are ultimately going to buy wheat where they can get it best and cheapest, and it is plain that no conference is going to be able to keep up prices for the wheat-growers of France's East European allies and satellites. International economic organization is becoming as necessary as it has hitherto been impossible. That lesson ought not to be forgotten when the world grain conference opens at Rome on March 26.

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SENATOR LA FOLLETTE blocked an eleventh-hour effort of big-navy advocates to get additional building appropriations by declaring flatly that he would support no such expenditures until the navy had made its building program clear. The bill authorizing modernization of the battleships Idaho, New Mexico, and Mississippi at a cost of $30,000,000 was signed by the President on Saturday, and an item of $10,000,000 for beginning the work was inserted by the conferees in the second deficiency bill. With its carry-over from last year the navy is estimated to have available for construction, including modernization work, a total of $68,000,000—which is $68,000,000 too much, but is distinctly better than what was threatened a short time since. The big-navy propaganda of the past few weeks has largely failed of its purpose. While the modernization of the three battleships will waste $30,000,000 and will make so much the harder the abolition of the battleship at the conference of 1935, we may at least be grateful that Congress has thus far resisted the temptation to build up to the treaty limit.

DETAILS OF THE PLOT to defeat Senator Norris for reelection in Nebraska have now been made public in a report by the Nye investigating committee. The report refers to "the obstacles of evasion and perjury encountered by the committee," declares that practices were disclosed "which appear to be as reprehensible as any of the better-known forms of fraud and corruption," and finally suggests that the committee was able "to establish the principal facts and identify many of the principal actors, even if the 'master minds' which conceived and directed [the plot] have not yet been fully revealed." One of these principal actors, the report states, was Robert H. Lucas, executive director of the Republican National Committee, who is said to have spent $4,000 secretly last year in the fight against Senator Norris. By this action, the committee asserts, Lucas is "chargeable with wilful violation of the Corrupt Practices Act." This is a serious charge. The Senate has the power, and it should press this accusation in the courts. Lucas, too, cannot afford to let the allegation go by unchallenged. It is not sufficient for him to announce through the Republican National Committee that he has reported all his expenditures in Nebraska in accordance with the law. If he is innocent of any wrongdoing he ought to insist that all the records be made public.

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT a few days ago ordered an embargo on Russian coal, wood pulp, pulpwood, lumber and timber of all kinds, furs, and asbestos. Although there has been considerable agitation for a similar embargo by the United States, the campaign has so far been unsuccessful. The Kendall bill, which was designed primarily to keep out almost all Russian goods, has been killed by a Senate committee, and it may be presumed that no further action in this direction will be taken until Congress reconvenes in December. The reasons for this action are not, of course, to be found in any political friendship for Soviet Russia that may exist here, nor can the committee's action be wholly explained by the fact that certain powerful American corporations stood in danger of having valuable contracts for the sale of machinery and other goods to Moscow canceled were the embargo to be laid down. The truth is that many business interests, because they themselves profit greatly by the importation of products from other countries where convict or forced labor is employed, are opposed to restricting trade with Russia on the ground that Russian labor might not be entirely free. It was the cigar manufacturers whose influence really killed the Kendall bill. Sumatra tobacco is used as a wrapper for at least half the cigars made in this country, and it is a notorious fact that the labor used in the Sumatra tobacco fields is anything but "free." Many other American business interests are in a similar position.

THE SENATE in a sharply worded resolution has by unanimous consent expressed disapproval of the State Department practice, in effect since 1922, of passing on foreign loans offered by bankers in this country, and of the department's action in forbidding Federal Reserve officials to serve on the international bank. The resolution reads:

> *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Department of State, having no legal sanction for the action mentioned in S. Res. 293 with respect to investment securities offered in the money markets of the United States by foreign governments, corporations, or individuals, should desist from the dangerous practice of involving the United States government in any responsibility of whatever nature, either by approval or disapproval, for foreign investment loans floated in this country; and should refrain from assuming authority over the Federal Reserve Board and banks or officials thereof with respect to matters which, by express authority of law, are confided to them and not to the Department of State.

The State Department thus far has given no indication of any intention to change its practice, and Senator Glass, introducer of the original resolution, threatens legislation to "penalize any governmental officials thus undertaking a lawless defiance of the Congress." State Department action on foreign loans privately offered here has been the object of continued criticism during the past ten years, and recent revelations of commissions (not to call them bribes) paid to officials of foreign governments in connection with recent loans in Peru, Italy, and Panama have increased public sensitiveness in this regard.

SIR OSWALD MOSLEY is persistent if not yet statistically influential, and his call for the formation of a new British political party makes it clear that he does not propose, if he can help it, to allow his earlier manifesto to pass as a mere flash in the pan or to abandon his efforts to pull British politics and industry out of the ruts. There is something of rhetoric, no doubt, in his assertion that "the nation drifts, in hopelessness and despair, to industrial failure and unemployment, followed by wage cuts and an all-round reduction in the standard of life which the government, without a policy, is unable to prevent," but his critics will be hard put to it to show that his diagnosis is not substantially correct. The MacDonald Government, certainly, has little to its credit as far as its treatment of the economic situation is concerned, and its reported intention to drop the trade-disputes bill in the face of a Liberal amendment which might make any strike illegal does not show much of the old Labor fighting disposition. Sir Oswald is less convincing in his proposal of a super-Cabinet and a comprehensive scheme of national economic planning, and

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although he denounces both protectionism and free trade he does not point out exactly what he would put in their place. His call for a new party, however, comes at a time when national dissatisfaction with existing parties is increasingly marked, when the domestic policies of the Labor Government are spelled only in terms of drift, and when the youth movement, to whose support Sir Oswald particularly appeals, is openly critical of parliamentary institutions. There is material here for revolutionary change, even though Sir Oswald should not succeed in mobilizing it.

"ACCORD IN PRINCIPLE" is one of those diplomatic phrases which may mean much or little, and until the details of the naval agreement which has been reached by France and Italy are made public we shall not know in what way the differences which have kept those Powers from accepting the limitations of the London naval treaty have been reconciled. The speculations of newspaper correspondents, doubtless based in part upon hints let drop by some of the negotiators, suggest that the two countries may not continue their competitive naval building after this year, that France is prepared to accept a material reduction in the tonnage figures which it put forward at the London conference, and that the fundamental issue of parity is to be allowed to rest until 1936, when the London treaty comes up for reconsideration. If these results turn out to have been attained, the cause of naval reduction and limitation will have been advanced and an irritating political situation in Europe will have been adjusted. The American and Japanese governments, of course, are also to be heard from, since their assent would be necessary if the adhesion of France and Italy to the London treaty is to be in any way qualified. Mr. Arthur Henderson's unexpected intervention in the Franco-Italian controversy suggests that something pretty serious had developed. His success, if the agreement goes through, will still further enhance his reputation as an able and high-minded diplomatist.

IN INDIA, Lord Irwin, representing the British Empire, and Gandhi, speaking for Indian independence, have been trying for many days to find a basis for compromise and peace. They have divided so far on at least three questions. Gandhi demands an outside inquiry into police excesses in the present civil-disobedience campaign; Lord Irwin offers a departmental inquiry into any specific charges. The Nationalist leader asks the right to continue the boycott campaign against British goods; the Empire replies that it would be unthinkable to permit the Congress Party or any other group to tear down the British commercial trade which has been 150 years in building. Gandhi asks that Indians be permitted to make their own salt; the Viceroy replies that the salt-revenue law can be changed only by the legislature. Perhaps the deficit of almost $55,000,000 in the Indian budget now before the legislative assembly has some bearing also on this matter of the salt tax, which yields about 7 per cent of the Indian revenues. The issue between independence and empire could not be more clearly drawn than it is in these three questions. The Nationalists, with their avowed aim of sovereignty, can scarcely withdraw their demands. The Empire, being an empire, can scarcely grant them. The conversations had not ended at this writing, although there are reports that an agreement on the salt tax has actually been reached. One can only hope that good-will and patience, of which Lord Irwin and Gandhi have a remarkable share, may be able to accomplish what cold logic seems to make impossible.

NEVADA is having to look to its laurels in the matter of easy divorce. Arkansas and Idaho, enticed by the business that would-be divorcés brought to Reno, have recently enacted or have pending divorce laws substantially identical with those of Nevada. Under these laws a ninety-day residence is all that will be necessary in those States before divorce proceedings may be brought, on fairly liberal grounds. But Nevada is not going to give in without a struggle; a bill has been introduced in the legislature reducing the necessary residence period to six weeks; and State Senator Bush, probably in one of his lighter moments, has proposed that divorces in Nevada be granted by mail, with no residence required at all. This would certainly simplify matters very nicely and is worth the attention of States which want to capture the divorce business. In Nevada in 1928 there were more than ten times as many divorces per 1,000 of the population as in any other State in the union; and at that, the total was only 2,595 divorces, half as many as in New York State for the same year, and only 1.2 per cent of the total for the United States. It is evident that a ninety-day residence period is not easy enough to capture the bulk of the industry. But after all, it is not residence but climate that really matters. We suggest that all American divorces be granted at Miami Beach, time of residence immaterial except that a good coat of tan be prerequisite to a final decree. The Swedish system of merely registering intention to terminate a marriage is a little too honest and simple for American taste. But if we must be intricate, let us be comfortable as well.

BEFORE A PACKED AUDIENCE of the American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen in New York City, Lewis Mumford openly challenged the disinterestedness of the architectural committee of the 1933 World's Fair in Chicago for omitting Frank Lloyd Wright. The effort at a "modern" fair without Wright, the veteran leader of modernism, Mumford compared to "Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark." We have no desire to go into the details of the other speeches of a warm evening, since the subject was first opened in these pages in an article in the issue of December 3, 1930, by Douglas Haskell. Of immediate interest, however, was Raymond Hood's reply as a member of the committee. He offered the observation that genius is hard to work with; and then he mentioned with some disdain that Wright's advocates seemed to be writing men. Might this not rather indicate a good case for Wright? The architects of the committee are presumably honest, but what with their triple interests as business men, professional men, and artists, the addition of the new role of critic might conceivably put a strain upon their vision. In disinterested and permanent reference works such men as Fiske Kimball, Dean Edgell, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, not to mention the foreign authorities, have all —whether they liked his work or not—devoted lengthy discussions to Wright, pioneer and leader in the modern movement. The committee's reasoning under the circumstances seems trivial and irrelevant.

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Congress Adjourns

WE hope we shall never tire of defending Congress, not this or that particular Congress, but rather our representative national legislature as an idea and an ideal, for to this body we must look for genuine progress in our national affairs. Nevertheless, we feel that we cannot stretch our sympathy in this respect to cover the lame-duck session just closing; we view the passing of this session with small regret. It accomplished little of permanent value; it left much undone that needed its attention; it lost itself in the political strategy incidental to the 1932 Presidential campaign; it lacked the moral courage to overcome the opposition of a reactionary President, and it found itself unable to move forward in the face of the campaign of vilification conducted against it by big business and the daily press. Had it been spared the abuse heaped upon it by the newspapers, the White House, and some of its own members, and had it taken its responsibilities to the country as seriously as it did the commands of the political managers who are forever engaged in the game of President-making, a more encouraging report of its activities might have been written, for there is no denying that in this session there were plenty of opportunities for constructive achievement, and not a few men who were honestly anxious to get something done.

It was apparent from the start, however, that the short session would not get very far. In the Republican ranks there was no disposition at any time to get down to work. Hostility to Mr. Hoover and a fear that positive legislation might hurt them in 1932 were among the reasons why the majority adopted a do-nothing policy. The Democrats followed like tactics in their overwhelming desire to convince the conservatives of the country that the government would be safe in their hands. These minority members renounced their alliance with the insurgent group in order to make the Democratic Party appear as acceptable as may be humanly possible to the industrial and financial interests which heretofore have been content to rule with Republican help. The Progressives, without leadership or program to begin with, suffered heavily from this desertion. They could not even keep their own following together, splitting on every important vote, save one, that was taken in the short session.

The net results of the lame-duck session may be put into three categories. First, two more or less progressive measures were adopted: the Muscle Shoals bill, which could not have gone through had Senator Norris's great faith wavered for a moment; and the Wagner employment-exchange bill, which was fathered not by an insurgent, but by a Tammany Democrat. Second, the necessary supply bills, all that Mr. Hoover really wanted out of this session, were approved without difficulty. Third, the veterans'-loan measure was twice railroaded through both houses, the second time over Mr. Hoover's veto. There was also some minor legislation, such as the $115,000,000 public-works appropriation and the several millions voted for loans to drought-stricken farmers, but the importance of these measures was inflated by White House ballyhoo far beyond their real significance. Legislation that fell by the wayside included proposals to abolish the lame-duck session of Congress, to curb the injunction evil, to remedy defects in the anti-trust laws, to regulate motor-bus transportation, to reconsider railroad consolidation, to provide for banking and credit reforms, and to approve membership in the World Court. Moreover, and of greater significance, the short session failed to adopt any worth-while legislation bearing upon the economic depression, and it almost completely ignored the needs of the six or seven million jobless workers and their dependents. Except for the Wagner bill and the meager sums voted at Mr. Hoover's request, Congress seems not to have recognized that we are in the throes of a severe economic depression, that our economic system is on trial, and that our business and financial leaders have shown neither willingness nor ability to remedy the all-too-glaring defects in this system. It must be said to the credit of a few men like Senator La Follette, however, that all through the session they battled valiantly to have the government assume its full share of responsibility in the economic crisis.

All the Presidential nominations were approved by the Senate, although its confirmation of the three federal power commissioners was later recalled. The appointment of one of these men, George Otis Smith, is now hanging fire. Following its custom, the Senate accepted the several nominations with almost no effort to determine whether the men were in every way qualified to administer the offices to which they were appointed. In each case the Senate seemed content to vote its approval when it could find no scandal in the man's record. Only to this extent could there be said to have been anything resembling harmony between the Senate and the White House. In the lower branch Mr. Hoover fared much better until the last fortnight of the session. His three lieutenants, Longworth, Tilson, and Snell, kept the House submissive until the veterans'-loan bill came to a vote, and then the Hoover control fell to pieces. The effect of this collapse was seen a few days later when the House refused to accept the Doak substitute for the Wagner bill, which the Administration attempted to force upon Congress at the last moment in the hope of killing the latter measure.

The record of this session offers a sound argument for the abolition of lame-duck Congresses. The biggest problem before it was that presented by the economic depression; yet its achievements in this field are hardly worth noting. It virtually wasted three months while the new Congress, elected last November when the voters suffering from the hard times registered a marked desire for a change in the Washington government, was kept cooling its heels on the doorstep of the Capitol. There is little likelihood that the President will call this new Congress into session before December. Meanwhile the politicians will be grooming their candidates for the 1932 campaign, and our national welfare, because of the lack of foresight upon the part of Congress, will be left largely in the hands of a President who has revealed that he lacks understanding of our economic and social problems.

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The End of the *World*

BY midnight on February 26 the devoted staff of the New York *World* had written their last copy, had read their last proof; the presses were thundering for the last time so that some 300,000 readers might, on the morning of Friday, February 27, hold in their hands the last edition of what had been one of the great American newspapers. And although two decades of persistent newspaper consolidation and elimination should have prepared us for the merger of the *World* and the *Telegram*, the swallowing up of the morning *World* has generated a profound sadness, a keen sense of loss, as when an old and close friend departs forever from his former associates and environs.

The *World* will be missed. Not the *Evening World*, which, despite its comfortable advertising revenue and its increasingly intelligent and liberal editorial page, has never shared in the fame of its namesake in the morning field; surely not the Sunday *World*, with its cheap features, crude cartoons, "comics," and want of genuine news. But the familiar head, the familiar front page, the familiar contributors of the morning edition—their loss will be as deeply felt as would the loss of any single newspaper in the country. This is not to say that the *World* was a perfect newspaper, a completely noble and successful exemplar of the liberal journalistic tradition. It fell many times from grace—through inconsistency, through lack of force and emphasis, through bad judgment or a failure to get or recognize the news. But now that it is gone, these faults somehow seem less important than they did; and by contrast the *World's* many virtues shine out.

For forty-eight years the *World* has been a force to reckon with in New York and in national politics. Joseph Pulitzer, when he bought it in 1883, made many compromises with yellow journalism in order to obtain the gains in circulation and revenue that he needed. But in spite of the sensationalism that colored the *World's* first years, and that never entirely left it, it emerged more and more as a crusader in the battle against privilege and on the side of those who wished to see ancient American liberties preserved. Moreover, it did not hesitate to introduce the personal note in its pages, to write not only "human-interest" stories—too many of them sometimes—but to attach to its staff columnists and contributors who established themselves firmly as personalities with ideas that became a literary necessity to many thousands of daily readers. Why then has the *World* failed? Why were not the high principles of its founder and the efforts of his successors sufficient to keep the wolf from the door and the consolidator from the parlor?

The reason lies partly in an adherence to the same principles which Joseph Pulitzer, while he lived, carried on so effectively. In the twenty years since his death, journalism, like every other profession and industry, has undergone various and violent changes. Owning and managing a newspaper in these days is big business. A metropolitan daily today requires a capital of millions of dollars, a staff of thousands of men and women; and properly to manage this great business takes vision, strength, courage, and brains. Ralph Pulitzer, in his statement before Surrogate Foley on February 24, said with some justice that the *World* had fallen between two stools—the "quality" papers like the *Times* and the *Herald Tribune*, and the tabloids. Although he did not say so, it is evident that the insistence of Joseph Pulitzer on a "highbrow" editorial page and "lowbrow" news pages was a limitation on the recent managers of the *World*. This is an example both of the weight of the "dead hand" on an enterprise and of the unfortunate results of lack of force and foresight. For, given the brutal competition and increased size of the newspapers of today, nobody would have been more shrewd to modify a policy than Joseph Pulitzer. His successors did not have the courage and acumen to proceed as it was imperative for them to proceed if the *World* was to be a success.

During the years when the morning *World* was losing circulation and advertising, other papers were steadily gaining. Mr. Ochs had made his *Times* indispensable for those whose business or interest it was to keep abreast of the news. The *Herald Tribune* forged steadily ahead—in the main by making itself a better and fuller newspaper. The *World* made the fatal mistake of trying to recoup its losses by unwise economies. Less news rather than more appeared in its pages; less rather than more competent persons were chosen for its staff—because they cost less. The inevitable result was more losses instead of fewer. The *World* was visibly declining, it weighed less, both in avoirdupois and in intellectual content. More than that, its editorial policy became more uncertain. One could never be quite sure just how long it would maintain any given position, what hurdle in the race it would finally fail to take. Some of this sad decline may have been due to the infinite difficulties of publishing a newspaper in a large city amid fierce competition; much of it must have been due to ineptitude, bad judgment, bad management. The chief trouble lies probably in the fact that Joseph Pulitzer was an inspired journalist with a consuming passion for his newspapers, and that his sons who succeeded him were something less.

Two things offer themselves as partial consolation for the loss of the *World*. One is that the Scripps-Howard organization, which has taken over the New York Pulitzer holdings, is admirably fitted to carry on the liberal tradition which the *World* stood for. The other heartening fact is the distribution by the Pulitzers of $500,000 to *World* employees who have not found other work. Nor should the attempt on the part of these same employees themselves to buy and operate the papers be overlooked. This spontaneous and sincere effort to keep the *World* from an untimely death was infinitely heart-warming, even though probably predoomed to failure. Messages came in from all over the globe pledging money and other assistance to the proposed venture. Everybody on the staff down to the last office boy was eager to help, not only because this was a way of preserving a job, but because the *World* stood for something above and beyond its mere paper and ink. The *World* was an institution; it was even a grand institution, not without faults, not without many virtues. Reluctantly and with a full heart we bid it an honorable and affectionate farewell.

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A Living Judge

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES is just completing his ninetieth year. March 8 is the anniversary of a great judge, a great American, a great human being. Distinguished as volunteer soldier, as lawyer, as professor, as justice and chief justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, Justice Holmes came to the Supreme Bench of the United States in 1902, at an age when the ordinary man is already thinking of retirement. Since that time this extraordinary man has put in almost three decades of the most exacting labor, contributing to the work of the Supreme Court a long series of opinions—too often, alas, in dissent—whose grasp of relevant fact, whose divination of underlying issues, whose keen logic in dividing the true from the false have been matched only by their luminous exposition of legal principles and their unfailing beauty of literary style. No man has contributed in more important fashion to the social thought of the United States during the twentieth century; none has influenced more profoundly the minds of those men whose thinking is to shape the America of the future.

Justice Holmes has been a great judge because he was first a quietly great man, filled with an irrepressible intellectual zest and unflagging enthusiasm for life. As he put it in one of his sparkling occasional addresses:

> The chief worth of civilization is just that it makes the means of living more complex; that it calls for great and combined intellectual efforts, instead of simple, uncoordinated ones. . . . Such efforts mean more life. Life is an end in itself, and the only question as to whether it is worth living is whether you have enough of it.

For ninety years this eternally young man has had "enough of it":

> With all humility, I think "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" infinitely more important than the vain effort to love one's neighbor as one's self. If you want to hit a bird on the wing, you must have your will in a focus, you must not be thinking about yourself, and, equally, you must not be thinking about your neighbor; you must be living in your eye on that bird. Every achievement is a bird on the wing.

The influence of Justice Holmes has been due, however, not only to his character, to the quality of his thought, and to his sympathetic understanding of the modern world in which we live, but also to his rare power and skill of literary expression. Truly enough does Felix Frankfurter say: "He has built himself into the structure of our national life. He has written himself into the slender volume of the literature of all time." In the midst of one of Justice Holmes's legal opinions we read: "A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used." Compare the hammer-like force of this sentence: "But whatever the consequences we must accept the plain meaning of plain words." How often has he managed in a single phrase to illumine a whole realm of facts and ideas: "The Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Herbert Spencer's Social Statics"; "It will take more than the Nineteenth Amendment to convince me that there are no differences between men and women, or that legislation cannot take them into account"; "There is nothing that I more deprecate than the use of the Fourteenth Amendment beyond the absolute compulsion of its words to prevent the making of social experiments that an important part of the community desires, in the insulated chambers afforded by the several States."

But after all it is as a judge that Justice Holmes has made his deepest impress on our life and thought—and that because he has had so sound a conception of the place of law and the judge in the process of living:

> There is, too, a peculiar logical pleasure in making manifest the continuity between what we are doing and what has been done before. But the present has a right to govern itself so far as it can; and it ought always to be remembered that historic continuity with the past is not a duty, it is only a necessity.

Over and over, when his brethren of the bench have swept aside some mere legislative enactment for its contravention of those absolute principles of justice of which they are the sole repository, Holmes has set up against them his marvelous fiction of what a reasonable man might believe, and their absolutism has crumbled into dust—even though their decision, not his, was the law.

He has stood always for the right of social experiment. But if he has never been a dogmatist or an absolutist, yet he has always clung passionately to the basic principle of freedom on which a worthy society must be built. In his dissent in the case of Rosika Schwimmer he declares:

> Some of her answers might excite popular prejudice, but if there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other it is the principle of free thought—not free thought for those who agree with us but freedom for the thought that we hate.

And again in the Abrams dissent:

> Every year if not every day we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based upon imperfect knowledge. While that experiment is part of our system I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purpose of the law that an immediate check is required *to save the country.*

Never was there a time when we Americans and the peoples of the world at large needed more than today the profound faith in freedom that lies at the heart of the work of Justice Holmes. From both the left and the right that faith is assailed. In the East is heard the muttering thunder of revolution; in the West men watch in terror the threatened collapse of old economic arrangements and political institutions. And in the intervals they hear siren voices that sing of something sweeter than liberty. But they are false voices. Well for America and for the world if our people turn a deaf ear to their song and listen instead to the words of this wise, strong, and fearless American.

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England Fights On

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

London, February 18

HOW fares England? Is her situation as grave as it appears to the outsider who reads that there are more than two and a half million unemployed, with the Treasury facing at the moment a deficit of at least $150,000,000 and the probability of a much larger one in the coming fiscal year; with one industrial dispute after another to engross the time and drain the strength of the leading ministers; with the insurance fund, which pays the doles, about to borrow $100,000,000 more; with innumerable wails from captains of industry, heads of banks, and chairmen of railroads to the effect that the country is going to the dogs, and that the splendid old English character has undergone a sea change? Well, it would be idle to deny the gravity of the situation. For one thing Mr. Snowden has just officially vouched for it. England is a part of the European economic system, and that means that there cannot be health here if there is depression and retrogression in the economic life of other parts of Europe. But he would be foolish indeed who would yield to complete pessimism. One notices that the English have begun to complain, as they did not before; that they are finding it enormously difficult to adjust themselves to their new and secondary place in the world of finance and trade; that they have begun to lose faith somewhat in themselves and their manifest destiny. But that is a long way from saying that they are in as parlous a state of nerves as is Germany, or that their situation is as menacing as that of Italy.

England Will Muddle Through

For one thing, whatever the economic and political troubles, no one would think of suggesting that there is the least danger of revolution. That is in the air in some countries on the Continent, but no one dreams of it here. The Englishman does not think in terms of violence. If he is beginning to feel that he has got his back to the wall, he is none the less not in the least bit interested in those who urge him into revolutionary socialism, for example. Communism is making no headway here. So slight a menace to law and order is the huge army of unemployed that, as many of the readers of *The Nation* are aware, England has closed since the war twenty-one of its prisons for lack of occupants —a magnificent testimony to the most truly law-abiding and orderly people on earth. If it were not for the dole, of course—let Mr. Hoover take note—this record could not be cited. Indeed, everybody admits that there would be revolution here if the government did not recognize its every obligation to keep those of its citizens above water who through no fault of their own are unable to obtain any employment.

So one is far from saying that England will not muddle through, barring an economic catastrophe on the Continent which would draw the whole world into a fellow-suffering. Take the cotton dispute, which has just been settled by the amazing action of the employers in suddenly receding from there entire position, and castigating themselves in so doing in an almost unheard-of way. No one has maintained that the weavers were wholly in the right, but after reading the sensational speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of February 11, with its picture of the gravity of the British situation, the employers publicly apologized for their share in a dispute which they themselves stated centered upon a matter that was by no means important enough to cause the stoppage of an entire industry. The coal dispute in Wales, too, has been ended; no longer do the men stand idle in rain or shine in the streets of some of their hopeless villages without a single thing to do to pass away the time, yet bearing it all with a resignation and a fortitude equaled only by the amazing patience and long-suffering of the army of German unemployed. Somehow or other, one gets the feeling that England *will* muddle through if it is humanly possible.

Labor Party Prestige

Politically, the stock of the MacDonald Government has risen as a result of the India conference and the success of the Foreign Secretary, Arthur Henderson, at the last meeting of the Council of the League of Nations. The India conference was another example of the ability of the Englishman to succeed when the outlook seems darkest. No one thought there was a ghost of a hope of reconciling the diverse elements that went to make up the conference. It became an extraordinary personal triumph for Ramsay MacDonald, because of his unending patience, his sagacity and skill in presiding. Within the conference itself the honors went to Lord Sankey and Lord Reading, and that extraordinary Indian Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. But in the last analysis the honors will go to MacDonald, who called the conference and bore the brunt of organizing it and outlining its work. It is too early, of course, to say that the recommendations will be accepted by the Indian Nationalists, yet the fact remains that the seemingly impossible task of reconciling diverse Indian elements was achieved, and that the decisions arrived at have the approval of the Liberals and the great bulk of the Conservatives, with the exception of Winston Churchill and some other diehards. Who would deny the genius of the Englishman in such matters, or despair of his future when he can meet such a crisis? It is all the more striking because the results, while far from being what India will eventually achieve in the way of independence from Great Britain, were none the less far in advance of the recommendations of the report of Sir John Simon's commission. Poor Sir John! He is a sad figure. For two years he put his heart and soul into that study of India. It was acclaimed by conservative newspapers on both sides of the ocean as a great contribution to the literature of the government of peoples, yet when the conference met, Sir John Simon was not a member of it, because the British government was notified that if he were, the conference would meet without a single Indian delegate present. And not once in all the discussions of the conference was the Simon report ever mentioned or cited.

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Mr. Henderson's success at Geneva has rightly added to his prestige. It places him, as Henry W. Nevinson stated at a Queen's Hall disarmament meeting the other night, right alongside of Ramsay MacDonald as a great foreign minister. He, too, has tact and skill in presiding. He has also persistence and directness and clear vision on many topics, and in this case he served not only his country well, but all of Europe also. There is no doubt that his prestige within his own party has greatly increased and that his achievement has helped to produce the existing situation, in which, so far as one can foresee, the Labor Government will hold office for at least another year after Mr. Snowden's budget is presented. It is, of course, possible that it may go down suddenly on some issue which may be, like the Zinoviev letter, of small import. But the fact is that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives wish to go to the country just now—Lloyd George is, moreover, markedly friendly at this moment and has urged Snowden on to defy the great capitalists of the "City." That the Laborites will lose a number of the coming by-elections is indisputable. I have not met a single Labor man to whom I have put the question who does not believe that if a general election were to be held now the Labor Party would lose a tremendous number of seats, and that the Conservatives would gain largely, and the Liberals somewhat.

Discontent Within the Ranks

One reason for this is the very great disappointment within the Labor Party with its government's achievements. It is impossible to conceal this, or the fact that a great deal of the enthusiasm which animated the rank and file of the party in the last election has evaporated. The party is not worried by Sir Oswald Mosley's defection. Its leaders do not believe that he has in him the stuff to make a dangerous leader; he is personally unpopular and they are certain that his following will comprise only a handful. It is announced that only fifteen members of Parliament will join him in the "nation-wide attack" which he is soon to begin upon the MacDonald Government, even though he is on somewhat firm ground when he maintains that the Prime Minister is not so excited about unemployment as he should be, or, he could have added, as he was when he was leading the Opposition. What *is* serious is the disheartenment and disillusionment of many of the ablest younger workers in the party, who feel that they had a right to expect a great deal more constructive work from their government despite the fact that it has been a minority government. They are of the opinion that it has not been radical enough; that it justifies, in considerable degree, the sneers of the New York *Times* that this is not a revolutionary Socialist Party, but merely a Liberal Party with a very slight tinge of socialistic interest in the working classes. They had hoped for something startling and bold like the nationalization of railroads or of coal mines. They got legislation on coal which went by no means so far as Lord Sankey's famous report—legislation which cannot even be said to be successful since it is not being put to work effectively.

It is also not to be denied that much of the criticism centers around MacDonald himself. It is alleged that he is far more interested in foreign affairs than in domestic. That he is much more successful in dealing with foreign policies is beyond dispute. No one should ever forget that in his first administration he was the ablest and best foreign secretary that England has had in generations, and that it was he himself who made Locarno possible. The first time that the Germans and French shook hands was when MacDonald brought them together and made them do so. Against him it is asserted that he is naturally aristocratic in temper and tendencies, that he does not dig down deeply into a domestic problem, and does not attack it so vigorously as would Snowden or Henderson. Whatever justice there may be in this charge, it is undeniable that this has not been a radical government, and that the party has had another cold douche, this time at the hands of Snowden himself, who in his very gloomy speech of February 11 declared there must be no further government expenditures "however desirable . . . until prosperity returns," and that "an increase of taxation in present conditions which falls on industry would be the last straw," thus condemning his party to masterly inactivity with respect to the carrying out of any further social-service schemes as long as it remains in office this time. Indeed, it is hard to see how after this blast the government can champion any schemes for great public works, such as road-building, with which to combat unemployment—schemes favored by the Liberals and especially by Lloyd George. Where is the money to be found? British productive capacity, Mr. Snowden says, has now fallen off 20 per cent, which means 20 per cent loss in those resources from which the Exchequer must draw its revenue, while capital values have correspondingly dropped. Said he: "No budget in the world could stand such an excessive strain as that which has been placed upon it by the increase of unemployment during the last twelve months"; and it is undeniable that if something radical is not done to help general world conditions, unemployment is more likely to increase here than to decrease.

Minority and Compromise

The difficulty with the Labor Party is, of course, that it took office as a minority party, and its leaders had to decide whether they should go out soon on some radical proposal or seek to remain in office a long time at the price of compromises, and, as has happened, seek to convince the financial interests of the nation that the Labor Government was not a dangerous revolutionary affair. Had it been revolutionary, British credit would have fallen, and the Labor Government's financial difficulties would have been enormously increased. At the same time it is undeniable that some of the ministers were tremendously interested in holding on to their offices. The flesh-pots of office are as alluring here as in other countries, and Labor ministers are no less susceptible to the prestige and emoluments of office-holding than officials in other countries. I remember calling on one minister in June, 1929, just after the MacDonald Government took office. I was prepared then for what has happened since, for when I asked that minister what single radical or socialistic measure the government was going to put through while in office this time, the minister looked perfectly blank and replied: "Why, Mr. Villard, we would lose office at once if we tried anything of the kind." The suggestion that it might be well for the party to lose office on a clear-cut radical issue, such as the nationalization of the mines or the railroads, met with no response.

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As the MacDonald stock has gone down within the party, the Henderson stock has risen. I find many who openly say that when the party goes out Henderson must become the party leader, and also the next Labor Prime Minister whenever the party gets back into office. No other name is suggested. It is a fact that these two men—MacDonald and Henderson—are in a class by themselves, and that no one else has come forward to challenge their leadership. That Mr. Henderson has in any way encouraged this movement is not for a moment believed; no one questions his loyalty, just as no one questions his intense desire to achieve great results at the disarmament conference in February, 1932. But even here one notes the timidity of office-holders. His speech at the disarmament meeting in Queen's Hall last week was an admirable statement of the case for disarmament and of the terrors of the next war, but it contained not a single definite pledge as to what his government would propose or as to how bravely it would fight. Indeed, when one heard him insisting in the same old politician's way that the government could not accomplish anything unless backed by the public opinion of the country, one had the feeling that an alibi was being carefully prepared in the event of a failure. None the less, as I have said, Henderson is a great asset to his party, to his country, and to Europe. The reason why the demand for his leadership has grown is that he has in mind an extensive program for domestic reforms and reorganization, the sort of thing that the rank and file of the Labor Party are longing for. Henderson has, of course, the advantage of having long been president of the Labor and Socialist International and having been very deeply concerned for many years with international and labor problems. It by no means follows, however, that the change from MacDonald to Henderson will take place. It is far too early to guess.

Despite the weakness of Labor and the disaffection within the party because of the government's failure to fulfil preelection promises and expectations, it is an interesting fact that some of the papers report a considerable Liberal drift to Labor. Highly interesting are two recent happenings. A director of one of the biggest engineering and shipbuilding firms in the country has just joined the Fabian Society and accepted a candidacy for Parliament on the Labor ticket at the next election. This is much as if President Grace of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation had announced that he had joined the American Socialist Party and would run for Congress in the next election on the Socialist ticket. More than that, Sir Ralph Wedgwood, the managing director of the London and Northeastern Railway Company, is reported to have declared that he will vote Labor in the next election. Note his reason: it is that the game is up for capitalism; that in social control of business lies the hope of the future. But incidents like these only intensify the regret of the ardent members of the Labor Party that no great measure of social control stands to the credit of the MacDonald Government. They declare that the most advanced and useful measure yet passed is the Electricity Supply Act of 1926, which is to be credited to the Baldwin Government. That did away with private control of the generation of electricity. A Central Electricity Board now controls that, and will hereafter without doubt lead in the direction of government manufacture of light and power and control of the entire process. Here is confirmation of the old gibe that the way to get a radical reform is to have a Conservative Government in office driven to action by the attack of a radical Opposition!

Other Parties, Other Troubles

Aside from the fact that neither of the other parties would care to take office under the existing highly depressing economic conditions, they are neither of them entirely happy within their own ranks. Winston Churchill has left the Conservative "shadow cabinet" because of Baldwin's attitude on the India conference. Lord Beaverbrook's attacks upon Baldwin grow more bitter. Two days ago he promised that he would have "a lot more to say to him" before he had "done with him." He added, "We cannot repudiate Mr. Baldwin's settlement of the American debt, but we can repudiate Mr. Baldwin [cheers and groans]." This at a meeting in East Islington, where there is a by-election tomorrow in which Beaverbrook has entered an Empire Crusade candidate against Conservative, Liberal, and Labor candidates. In view of the rise of protectionist sentiment in this country, all this hardly makes a happy situation for Baldwin. In the Liberal camp things are not too pleasant, either. There is a widespread belief that Lloyd George has reached the bottom of his campaign chest, out of which he has for years defrayed a large portion of Liberal Party expenditure. I have already spoken of a certain amount of Liberal defection to Labor. In addition, it is confidently expected that Sir John Simon will ere long find his way into the Conservative camp, and with him any such following as he may have. The Liberal press, too, is suffering a great deal. It is only a short time ago that the *Daily News* and the *Chronicle* were combined, but Fleet Street believes that the new paper is having hard sledding, and one regrets to hear that the Liberal *Manchester Guardian*, the greatest of all English dailies, is not having the prosperity which it so richly deserves. The combination of the *Nation* and *New Statesman* is another sign of the journalistic times; the new management announces that it will be independent of any party. Whether it can maintain itself on this basis is perhaps open to question. Meanwhile, the Labor *Daily Herald*, which has been vulgarized and popularized to a degree, has reached the extraordinary circulation of a million and a quarter copies a day. Editorially it still stands for Labor—after a fashion.

On the whole, it is not surprising that MacDonald seeks successes in the international field. It is vital that Europe should cooperate to end the existing crisis and restore world trade to its normal flow. England would render a great service should it call an international conference to that end. Sooner or later such a meeting must be held. It will be interesting to see if Mr. MacDonald is first to recognize the opportunity and first to act. He is in a position to render a greater service even than that which he performed when he pointed the way out of the chaos which existed in Europe after the French invasion of the Ruhr. He may, indeed, have the opportunity to be the savior of Europe.

Meanwhile, humor and sarcasm have not departed from the British Empire. Witness the question asked in the House of Commons yesterday as to whether there were any Englishmen or Englishwomen among the starving in Arkansas and Oklahoma!

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Hard Times and Hard Facts

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

FIVE facts stand out in this second winter of the Hoover depression. First, all the optimism of official Washington has failed to check the spread of unemployment, which is continuing to increase. Second, the promise made to President Hoover by numerous industrial leaders on November 21, 1929, that they would not "initiate any movement for wage reduction" has not been observed; pay rolls have been slashed by one means or another throughout most of the country. Third, private charity in altogether too many communities has been found unequal to the task of coping with the present emergency. Fourth, public-works construction has, thus far at any rate, proved ineffective as a means of relieving the unemployment strain. Fifth, few of our public men have any notion as to how they might best deal with the problem of unemployment and relief. Authority for these statements is drawn from the replies of 127 municipal officials who during the past fortnight have given *The Nation* the facts in response to a general questionnaire. Thirty-five States and every important economic area of the country are represented in the survey, and the replies may fairly be said to portray with unusual accuracy the unemployment situation as it exists throughout the nation. *The Nation's* questionnaire was based upon a similar survey made last December by Senator La Follette of Wisconsin with the help of Senator Walsh of Massachusetts. The questions and a summary of the replies follow.

1. *Has there been any change in the unemployment situation since your reply of last December to Senator La Follette?*

Fifty-six mayors replied that there had been no change; thirty-one reported a slight improvement; one mayor reported a marked increase in the number employed; thirty-two said that the situation had become worse instead of better; and six replied that there had been a sharp increase in the number of unemployed workers. It is worth noting that virtually all the cities reporting a decrease in unemployment were small communities, whereas those reporting increases were for the most part large industrial centers. Speaking for Detroit, Josephine Gomon, secretary of the Mayor's Unemployment Committee, writes that "the conditions in Detroit are as bad as, if not worse than, they have been at any time during the depression." Fred K. Hoehler, Commissioner of the Department of Public Welfare in Cincinnati, reports that "there has been a considerable increase in the amount of unemployment in this vicinity since last December." From Dayton, Ohio, comes one word describing the change there: "Worse."

2. *Have pay rolls in your city been noticeably reduced during the past year by part-time employment or by any other means?*

On this question city officials are generally agreed. No less than 102 replies state that pay rolls and also in some cases wages have been reduced, and of these sixteen declare that there have been unusually heavy reductions. Edward P. Reidy, Director of Public Aid in Providence, Rhode Island, answers: "Yes, decidedly so." Mayor J. Henry Stump of Reading, Pennsylvania, says: "Pay rolls have been greatly reduced as many plants are only working part time; in addition there have been wage cuts." Mayor H. A. Hill of Wichita, Kansas, writes: "Yes, both through part-time labor, reduced scale paid, and with some permanent shortening of forces." Mayor S. A. Hughart of Mattoon, Illinois, declares: "It has been alarmingly decreased." Mayor H. M. Swift of Mount Vernon, Illinois, says that one of the biggest factories in his city "cut wages 25 per cent on all steady employees." However, the great bulk of the returns show part-time employment responsible for most of the pay-roll cuts; in many of the reporting cities workers' earnings have been reduced by half or more in this manner. Only eighteen communities boast that their pay rolls have been maintained, while one, Jacksonville, Illinois, reports pay rolls "10 per cent above normal."

3. *Are private agencies giving adequate service in providing relief?*

Every one of the officials responding recognizes that the sharp decrease in the earnings of the workers has added greatly to the task of providing relief. Less than half of these officials, fifty-two to be exact, declare that private charity is giving adequate service. All the others say that the private charities have proved inadequate in the emergency or are compelled to fall back upon municipal or county governments for help. In Waltham, Massachusetts, for example, the city is furnishing nine-tenths of the funds used in unemployment relief. Twelve of the replies state flatly that the private organizations are not giving adequate service. In Cincinnati relief is being confined to the distribution of food and clothing. Mayor Walter E. Batterson of Hartford, Connecticut, simply replies, "No." The Director of Public Welfare of Dayton, Ohio, says that private agencies are giving remarkable service "with the funds available." In Providence, Rhode Island, the "private agencies are getting low on funds." Harry Hesselbein, managing secretary of the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Chamber of Commerce, says that the private agencies are unable to do much "because of insufficient funds." Mayor R. K. Davis of Oskaloosa, Iowa, considers that the private organizations are not working efficiently "on account of lack of funds." In Mount Carmel, Illinois, according to Mayor John Coleman, these agencies are "not getting enough funds to furnish relief if we should have a bad spurt of weather." M. Parrent, City Clerk of Frankfort, Kentucky, expresses doubt as to whether private relief "is at all sufficient to meet the requirements." Mayor George O. Marshall of Niles, Ohio, says that "we have not been able to give 100 per cent relief." Mayor J. W. Hickman of Nelsonville, Ohio, asserts that "private agencies are doing good work, but cannot meet the situation." William J. Unfried, Comptroller of Oak Park, Illinois, thinks that the private agencies "may be doing all they possibly can, but indications lead us to believe that they are not cooperating as fully as possible."

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4. *Is public-works construction in your city or vicinity proving of any tangible benefit in dealing with the employment problem?*

Less than a third of the officials reporting hold that public-works construction has been of any tangible benefit. Against these forty-two favorable replies, twenty-three state that public works have been of only slight assistance and twenty-five say that such construction has been of no help whatever. In thirty-six other communities no public building has been undertaken and therefore these cities must be considered as having derived no benefit from this suggested solution of the problem. However, about twenty of the reporting officials say that construction work of one kind or another will be started with the approach of milder weather. Only a half-dozen of the replies even as much as mention a federal building program, most of those who agree that this method has helped declaring that the local governments have supplied the necessary jobs. The Mayor of Hartford, Connecticut, describes public building as "the only instrument which has effectively aided employment this winter." On the other hand, Detroit answers: "No. The public-works program has been reduced to a workable minimum." In Cincinnati the "program has at its best provided work for only a fraction of the men laid off by private industries." In Johnstown, Pennsylvania, "able-bodied men applying for emergency relief are required to work for the city. Thus a large amount of public work is being done without cost to the taxpayers." Knoxville, Tennessee, agrees that public work has helped, "but this is city and county work. Why can't Washington get busy on the Tennessee River storage dams?"

A similar sentiment is expressed by Mayor Speer of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, who says that "the government has been contemplating building a post-office building, but has not started yet. Herb had better hurry this matter along or he will sure be blowed up here for the 1932 campaign." Mayor Roger T. Sermon of Independence, Missouri, declares that public works have helped "some, but not much. Our experience has been that contractors on these jobs bring men in from the outside to do the work." The Mayor of Oskaloosa, Iowa, reports that "there are hundreds of floaters following up the construction." City Manager Henry Traxler of Janesville, Wisconsin, not only says that public building has not helped, but adds that in his opinion such construction "never will solve the problem or even make a dent. Cities with the largest programs are suffering the most. Industry is the only salvation."

5. *Have you any suggestions as to how the problem of unemployment and relief might best be dealt with?*

Frightened by the hostility of the daily press, most of which can be traced to White House inspiration, Congress has refused to vote funds for immediate relief of the unemployed and other needy workers. Business and industry have come forward with nothing substantial in the way of a solution; indeed, they have merely succeeded in aggravating the situation by continuing to lay off workers while preaching confidence and optimism to the people. Mr. Hoover appears to have washed his hands of the whole business by declaring that the problem must be left to "the producers and consumers themselves" and that therefore the government must not interfere. Mr. Hoover's "American way" of providing relief, though functioning fairly well in some communities, has fallen down in many others. Public-works construction, another of the official solutions, has for one reason or another failed to solve the problem. A number of the local officials responding to *The Nation's* questionnaire suggested remedies of their own, but while a few of these suggestions appear logical and practical, more of them are quite obviously visionary or otherwise hopeless. However, they do in the aggregate reveal a willingness to face the problem realistically and honestly, an attitude that has been strangely lacking in Washington.

Commissioner Hoehler of Cincinnati would, for example, have the federal government approach the problem of unemployment and relief

> . . . with the idea that it is a more or less permanent problem rather than of temporary nature. During the years when the federal government is accumulating a surplus revenue it might also be advisable to set up some sort of machinery to set aside a part of this surplus for relief purposes and to distribute this over the population during the depression. All of this would apply not only to the federal government but also to our larger cities.

Mayor Batterson of Hartford, on the other hand, would "let each community handle its own problem and cut out talk of federal assistance." Mayor M. E. Dillon of Ashland, Wisconsin, gives it frankly as his opinion that

> . . . the political and industrial leaders of the nation are at the present time on trial as to their ability to find a way out of the present trouble and also to prevent its recurrence. Whether labor conditions can be stabilized or whether unemployment insurance should be worked out, I do not know, but I do believe that the division of profits in nearly all lines of industry is not fair to the worker. In a government like ours it should be made impossible for an industrial leader to make a profit of twenty-five or thirty million a year and through his business methods cause all of his agencies and distributors to go broke and his employees to be out of work.

Mayor Martin Miller of Fort Scott, Kansas, would take the burden off industry and government and place it on the workers fortunate enough to have jobs by assessing the latter 3 per cent of their monthly salaries. Mayor Lee R. Robbins of Norwich, Connecticut, thinks the situation would improve if the workers would voluntarily reduce their wage demands; on the other hand, Mayor F. W. Suitor of Barre, Vermont, suggests that "if a universal six-hour day with at least our present daily wage could be put into effect at once that would set men to work and in a short time take up the slack." Several others take the position that wages should be maintained, while Mayor Carl Hari of Alliance, Ohio, urges that each employer "be required to create an unemployment reserve fund, to be used in times of depression instead of dismissing their employees." Numerous other remedies are suggested, running all the way from further subsidies to the farmers to government operation of the railways, and from city ownership and management of overall factories to repeal of "our obnoxious tariff." Many of the mayors appear at least to be doing some thinking about the problem, and individually several of them have succeeded in solving it so far as their own communities are concerned. But the problem is nation-wide, and cannot be met by a narrow solution applicable to a single community.

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Hoover Suffers in the House

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, February 28

NOTHING illustrates the tremendous decline in the fortunes of the Hoover Administration more clearly than the remarkable series of reverses it has just suffered in the House. Except for occasional lapses the Senate can be depended on to maintain a respectable degree of independence; consequently the House, with its penitentiary discipline and convict morale, has been compelled to do the legislative dirty work for the last three Presidents, including the incumbent. But prison mutinies are the rule nowadays and the action of the House on the veterans'-loan, Wagner, and Muscle Shoals bills proves it is no exception. Not since Taft was President has an Administration majority in the House become so intractable. There are several very good reasons. The House Republicans are weary of White House dictation, especially when it compels them to go against their own convictions and more especially when it forces them to go against the wishes of their constituents. They know that Herbert the Unhappy is "in bad" with the country. They are able to draw a moral from the fact that the last election produced a stunning number of casualties among the faithful, whereas the insurgents almost without exception won with ease. The reaction is not only natural; it is inevitable. An interesting feature of the situation is the astounding loss of prestige suffered by Secretary Mellon. It fairly curdled the blood to hear the hoots and howls which greeted mention of his name as "the greatest Secretary since Hamilton" during the bonus debate. The truth is that Uncle Andy has outstayed his welcome. He should have emulated the canny Calvin by retiring when his star was at its zenith. Every day he remains will witness further shrinkage in his reputation. He has made too many tax refunds, juggled too many figures, and issued entirely too many misleading and disingenuous statements. Congress does not trust him any more. If he holds on until the next session Jack Garner is sure to force an investigation of his Internal Revenue Bureau. The best possible day for him to quit is today.

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WHATEVER the merits of the veterans'-loan bill, miscalled "bonus"—and I cannot quite agree with the editors of *The Nation* on the number and gravity of its demerits—the honest observer is irresistibly prejudiced in the bill's favor by the transparent dishonesty of the Administration's efforts to defeat it. In one breath it declares that thousands of veterans need no assistance and resent the effort to assist them; in the next it argues that they will fall all over themselves to borrow the money and squander it. The bill is pictured as destroying the "'only safeguard" of veterans' families against old age and poverty, although it requires no imagination to realize how long a family could live on $1,000. Congress is told there is not a penny in the Treasury to meet the cost, although every member knows there is a reserve fund of more than $770,000,000 available for that purpose. Congress is accused of abandoning the plan adopted in 1924, although a child can see that it has only accelerated the loan feature of the plan. The truth is that the bill probably will not help the veterans much and will not harm the country at all. Indeed, the Treasury stands to make money on the transaction. Moreover, the service certificates must be cashed not later than 1945, and no living soul can safely predict that conditions will be more propitious then than now. On the other hand, no discerning person will suppose that the hard-boiled tories who fought so bitterly against lending $15,000,000 to the starving farmers were actuated by humane motives in voting to lend $750,000,000 to the veterans. The veterans simply are better organized for political action. And Congress was really affronted by the shabby tactics of the Administration.

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FURTHER evidence that the House leaders have not entirely succumbed to the contagion of decency is found in their attempt to maim or scuttle the lame-duck amendment and to rob Senator Norris of credit for its authorship. As passed by the House the resolution contains certain jokers, one of which would prevent many State legislatures from ratifying it before the end of two years, and another estop it from taking effect until nearly two years after its ratification. Last and worst, it would arbitrarily fix May 4 as the date on which the second session of Congress would have to adjourn, thus perpetuating the biennial legislative log jam with its attendant danger of filibuster and its standing threat of extra sessions. There is not the slightest sense or reason in putting a constitutional limit on the length of any legislative session within the term for which members are elected. For the Seventy-first Congress to decree that the unborn members of the One-hundred-seventy-first Congress shall adjourn at noon of May 4, 2121 A. D., regardless of the state of legislation prevailing then, would be sheer lunacy. Fortunately it is not likely to occur. Norris will never consent, which means that the amendment must wait until the next Congress for submission.

* * * * *

ANOTHER Norris victory which is likely to be postponed until the new Congress meets is that involving the fate of Muscle Shoals. Unless all signs fail, President Hoover will have vetoed the bill or given it a pocket veto before this is printed. It is true that both houses of Congress have passed it by heavy majorities. It is true that the last pretense of objection on the ground of desiring to use the nitrate plant for the production of cheap fertilizer has been eliminated by compromise. There remains only the influence of the power companies and their determination that the property shall not become a "yardstick" by which the government can measure the real cost of generating and distributing electricity on a large scale. I suspect that this will be sufficient to prevent the bill from becoming a law. If the suspicion is unjust to Mr. Hoover, events will vindicate him. It may be noted in passing that the famous New

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Jersey liberal, Senator Dwight Morrow, kept his record clean by voting against the bill. Thus far he has voted consistently with that little group of back-bench reactionaries ribaldly designated in the press gallery as the "Unspeakables," which includes in its number such intellectual and parliamentary giants as Goldsborough of Maryland, Hastings of Delaware, Patterson of Missouri, and the ineffable Dr. Bingham, patron saint of the Connecticut Manufacturers' Association. It appears after all that history may recall Senator Morrow as the grandfather of C. A. Lindbergh, Jr., but let us hope a while longer. He cannot be quite so bad as his voting record to date indicates.

* * * * *

UNLESS something unexpected happens, Congress will adjourn Wednesday under circumstances containing no promise of an extra session. In other words, the chances are that before this appears the legislative branch of the government will have departed on a nine months' vacation in the middle of the worst depression this generation has produced, with its work less than half done, and with no adequate provision made for emergencies that are certain to arise in its absence. For this cowardly abdication of responsibility, Administration Republicans and bourbon Democrats are almost equally to blame. The duty of calling an extra session to deal with the multitude of existing problems rests primarily, of course, with the President, but we know this Administration too well to hope for anything so frank or courageous. The fact next in importance is that the Democrats could have forced the President to do what he should do but fears to do, and that for reasons of political expediency they decided against that course. It is difficult to distinguish between the political morals of Republican leaders who take their orders from the United States Chamber of Commerce and Democratic leaders who take theirs from Baruch, Raskob, and Owen Young. The truth is that Joe Robinson, Pat Harrison, and Claude Swanson are separated from Jim Watson, George Moses, and Reed Smoot by nothing except a narrow Senate aisle and a narrower conflict of personal interest.

The Chicago Circus

By W. A. S. DOUGLAS

Chicago, February 25

SIME SILVERMAN, the editor of *Variety*, thinks vaudeville and other forms of "flesh" entertainment are slipping in popularity. He ought to know what he is talking about. But so far he seems to have overlooked what may be one reason, namely, that the politicians, statesmen, rulers, and lawmakers of this world are providing bigger and better vaudeville entertainment than was ever dished up by a Palace Theater expert. Take Washington. Why should I spend my money at Keith's or the Fox or the Earle when I can get a seat in the Senate press gallery and listen to Tom Heflin or Thaddeus Caraway or Tooth-Puller Shipstead or any one of a dozen other comics? Why, for the same reason, should I push into a theater in any State capital while the local legislature is in session?

I'm all in favor of bigger and better clowning in politics. It saves me money and makes the pursuit of my profession a joyous thing. I've been reporting the Chicago mayoralty primary campaign for three weeks now and I don't think I've ever had such a good time in all my life. This was the supershow. To begin with, we had just one clown—but what a master-performer! Big Bill Thompson, without a make-up, comes on cold in a business suit and knocks you out of your seat. It looks easy. But that's just the art that's in the man. He fooled his competitors. They mistook born showmanship for a lot of gall superinduced by highballs. So they took up clowning too. Terrible!

Big Bill gave Chicago a taste of his histrionic abilities four years ago when he played straight man to King George of England. His Majesty was not there in person but Thompson's art made it easy to visualize the little bearded figure in crown and ermine right there beside the Mayor, having his nose tweaked every now and again and being warned to keep out of Chicago, to the delight of the Germans and the Irish. The Negroes didn't understand what it was all about, but Big Bill already had their votes safe in his pocket.

And so Big Bill Thompson came to be mayor for a third time. The four-year period which will come to a close in April has been a tempestuous one for Chicago. It has marked the rise to supreme power of Scarface Al Capone. There have been daily killings and robberies which have blazed the word "Chicago" to the far corners of the earth. And the blame—there are always people who will blame others for conditions such as these—has been laid on the broad shoulders of Big Bill Thompson.

Big Bill did not appear to take his reelection overseriously. He moved his offices from the City Hall to the Sherman Hotel across the street—it is reported that he found it easier to get ginger ale and cracked ice in the latter place. He was all set to have a good time with the minimum of bother to himself when the newspapers and law-and-order societies and that mysterious and ineffective mass known as the Better Element began to buzz about him like a lot of mosquitoes. They wanted to be rid of this slumbering behemoth and they went about their task in divers ways: law suits for recovery of city funds, allegedly misused; charges of malfeasance in office, of collusion with the criminal elements—all sorts of accusations; formation of vigilance committees; a determination to be rid of "Thompsonism"; a decision by the Better Element that one of their number should sacrifice himself for the public good and become mayor of the nation's second city.

If they had left Big Bill alone he probably would not have run for a fourth term. His health is none too good, he is no longer a young man, he has money, and he has a yacht, and before he dies he greatly desires to prove his theory that somewhere around the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea there exist flying fish that climb trees, build nests in branches, and there hatch their young.

But it was not to be. The reformers burned up Big

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Bill, and he leaped into the arena with a war whoop: "To hell with the Chicago *Tribune*." The Better Element had its hand called. The "roughneck" Mayor of Chicago—by the way, in the matter of family, he comes of as good a breed as any of his critics—became a candidate to succeed himself.

The Better Element of Chicago proved to be not unlike the Better Element of New York or Philadelphia or Cleveland or New Orleans. Everyone, it seemed, was personally too busy to be patriotic and lift the blight of "Thompsonism." And while they hemmed and hawed, there leaped into the breach Municipal Judge John H. Lyle, ex-alderman, ex-State representative, who had made a name for himself by insulting gangsters who had been dragged before him and imposing enormous bail bonds upon them. His platform was simple—he promised to clear the city of Capone and all his works. The Chicago *Tribune*, Big Bill's bitterest foe, didn't want the Judge as a candidate, but the Better Element had lain down on the job. Lyle became the standard-bearer of the forces of righteousness.

The behemoth over in the Sherman Hotel considered the news—Lyle. "That palookah!" he observed to his henchmen. "Boys, we're going to have a circus."

And a circus it has been.

In all, nine candidates entered the Republican primary. First there was Big Bill, then the Judge, then Alderman Arthur Albert, sponsored by the lame-duck Senator, Charles Deneen, who owed the Mayor a wallop long before Hizzoner went Democratic at the last national election and helped Jim Ham Lewis whip Ruth Hanna McCormick who had first whipped Deneen for his Senate seat. Next in prominence came ex-City Controller George Schmidt, who ran as "the only Republican candidate with a reputation." The other five don't count. The Democrats bowed to the ambition of their party boss, Anton Cermak, born in Prague, Bohemia, and gave him the nomination. It looks at this writing as though Mr. Cermak will achieve his desire to be mayor if the Better Element doesn't mess things up.

The first thing Big Bill did was to borrow the Cort Theater from his old crony "Sport" Herrmann, who at the beginning of the Mayor's present term served as public executioner of all books found in the public libraries which could be set down as pro-British propaganda and were conceivably planted there by King George's minions. He soon tired, however, of the uncomplimentary remarks of the daily press and went off on a long fishing expedition. Even now he is in the shark-infested regions of the South perfecting a rubber fishing rope. (The idea is that the shark grabs the hook, puts up its fight, draws a momentary breath, and, while doing so, releases the tension. The rubber rope immediately tightens, yanks the shark out of the water, and shoots it against the side of the boat with a wallop sufficient to knock it senseless.)

It has been the custom in Chicago for the candidates to wind up the last week of their campaigns in the Loop—the business district—exhorting the wage-earners during their lunch hours. Big Bill opened his show at the Cort Theater a full three weeks before primary day. He opened it with a bang—eighteen clowns, a school of monkeys, two boxing ponies christened the Wickersham twins, Yes and No, two jackasses, an elephant and a camel, trapeze artists and jugglers. What this retinue had to do with electing Chicago's next mayor was Big Bill's own business. He won an election four years ago clowning about King George and he was out to win this one with some superclowning. He had the jump on his opponents. His street parade was allegorical and crudely insulting. The voters, aside from the Better Element, required something obvious, easily understandable, and amusing.

Along Randolph Street every day for three weeks there wound a cavalcade of half a dozen cowboys, mounted, booted, and spurred; a calliope braying forth Big Bill's private anthem, "America, First, Last, and Always"—the Mayor has his own poet laureate in the person of Milt Weil and his own master-of-the-horse or parade-organizer in the person of Louis Golen; an elephant; a camel; a dozen Shetland ponies; a cage of monkeys; a lean mule ridden by a cadaverous individual labeled "The Judge"; a tiny burro ridden by a small fat boy labeled "Little Arthur"—meaning Alderman Arthur Albert; an old-time brewery wagon concealing in its innards a high-powered phonograph which played "Happy Days Are Here Again."

The parade halted at the Cort Theater, drew its crowd, and filed inside. There the Mayor took the stage as master of ceremonies, introduced his two jackasses as his two leading opponents, the Judge and the Alderman, and then proceeded to ask them embarrassing and personal questions.

Lyle and Albert rushed to the Loop and rented a theater apiece. Big Bill responded by hiring another one and then a third. He concentrated his fire on Judge Lyle. From the stage of his three theaters he termed the judge a wife-murderer (the late Mrs. Lyle died following a fall off the steps of her home) and said he could prove him to be a degenerate. Whereupon the Judge lost his temper, forsook his attitude of dignity, got a battery of machine-guns and sawed-off shotguns, and tried to out-clown the master-clown, exactly as Big Bill had hoped he would.

Every day the Loop was a bedlam. The roars of the candidates, carried on loud speakers to the streets, were so intermingled that no one voice was distinguishable. Big Bill overcame that difficulty by having city electricians put his opponents' amplifiers out of commission. In answer came a bombardment of eggs with himself as target at the Apollo Theater. Big Bill looked on while his attacker was brutally kicked out of the place and warned the Judge that if any more eggs hit him, Big Bill, he would go across the way and "stamp hell" out of his rival. There were no more eggs.

Lyle's clowning went flat. He said himself he couldn't be dirty but he could be nasty. He was nasty, but in an unfunny ponderous way, while Big Bill got dirtier and funnier. The crowds at his circus show at the Cort were so big that the Mayor decided to charge twenty-five cents admission, with free sofa pillows to the first hundred women to pass the box office. And still they kept pouring in to look at the jackasses and the monkeys, to watch Big Bill's talkie of what he claims to have done for Chicago. The picture was entitled "Thompsonism" in honor of the slogan of his opponents: "Drive Out Thompsonism"—yards upon yards of street improvements all carrying the title: "If This Be Thompsonism Make the Most of It."

Little Arthur Albert also tried to do some clowning. He bought an old four-in-hand coach which Mrs. Albert has been driving around the Loop. But who would want to look at an old coach when there are jackasses, camels,

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elephants, and monkeys just around the corner? Mr. and Mrs. Albert and their coach have been a terrible flop.

Clown Thompson has won over Clown Lyle, Clown Albert, and all the other lesser Republican clowns. He becomes now the opponent of Anton Cermak, the Democrat, at the mayoralty election six weeks hence. Cermak looks like the winner against any Republican candidate, including Thompson. But the Better Element itself may turn the trick for Big Bill. It is now grooming as an independent candidate Coroner Herman Bundesen, Democrat, who like Royal Copeland of New York has acquired political prestige and place by writing a daily newspaper column of advice to mothers. The women of Chicago will vote solidly for Coroner Herman, and their votes will come mostly out of Cermak's total.

The result? Big Bill, the master-clown, will be returned to power. Big Bill would be not only willing but tickled to death to pay Bundesen's campaign expenses.

Negro Chain Stores

By H. M. FOSTER

HARLEM, the largest city of colored people in the world, has seen during the past year the organization of a voluntary chain of retail grocery stores to teach colored retail grocers to become better business men. It is an adaptation of a plan that has already succeeded in other parts of the country. For the benefit of those who do not know what a voluntary chain is, it should be explained that it is a frank imitation of the regular old-fashioned chain stores, except that in the newer plan individual ownership is retained.

The plan of operation is simple. The wholesale grocer makes an arrangement with a selected group of his customers, with or without an actual contract, by which they agree to buy all or most of their wares from him, in return for which he sells them staples at or near cost and adds three or four specials as "loss leaders" each week. He advertises for them in the local newspapers, remodels their stores on modern scientific lines, keeps their buildings fresh, clean, and well painted, and gives them a uniform sign with a common name, such as "Red and White," "Clover Farms," "I. G. A." But on each sign is the name of the proprietor. The wholesaler turns his salesmen into supervisors who teach the retailer to keep his store clean, his stock in order, and his store well lighted. They also trim windows and put up displays. Price tags are used just as in chain stores. In fact, everything that the chain stores do is done, but the retailer still owns his store, and the wholesaler still owns his business.

In the last four or five years these voluntary chains have grown in number to some 400 or 500 groups operating all over the country and including 60,000 retail stores. The Independent Grocers' Alliance is the largest organization of the kind, having over 50 wholesale firms and about 10,000 retailers. Now the plan has been adapted to the colored retail grocers of Harlem and other sections of the country.

In 1928 a dozen Negro grocers met in Montgomery, Alabama, and organized a Colored Merchants' Association, agreeing to run their stores as a voluntary chain and call them the "C. M. A. Stores." A. C. Brown, a successful grocer of Montgomery, is credited with having originated this plan. The original dozen have by this time nearly doubled their membership, and these grocers report that they have increased their sales from 40 to 60 per cent. The needs of the group are combined, and the wholesale grocers in Montgomery are invited to bid on one combined order. Unlike many of the associations of retail grocers, the theory on which these stores operate is not merely to buy cooperatively, but to sell intensively. The association teaches its members to sell as rapidly as possible, so that they accelerate turnover and increase profits. Advertising, too, is done cooperatively, and every week a three-column advertisement in Montgomery newspapers announces the special bargains of the C. M. A. stores. Another phase of the association's work is the installation of a uniform system of record-keeping in Colored Merchants' Association stores.

The Colored Merchants' Association in Montgomery is affiliated with the local Negro Business League, a branch of the National Negro Business League started in 1900 by the late Booker T. Washington when he was principal of Tuskegee Institute. The National Negro Business League is now national in scope, and the Colored Merchants' Association is fast becoming so. Dr. Robert R. Moton has succeeded Dr. Washington both as principal of Tuskegee Institute and as president of the National Negro Business League. Through the efforts of Albon L. Holsey, secretary of the National Negro Business League and national organizer of the Colored Merchants' Association, the work of the league and the association has spread from Alabama to the following cities: New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, Omaha, Richmond, Hampton, Norfolk, Winston-Salem, Nashville, Montgomery, Selma, Jackson, Tulsa, and Dallas. The reason for selecting the grocery business as the first one to be attacked in solving the Negro's commercial and economic problem is, according to Mr. Holsey, that trends in the grocery industry show so striking a change as compared with a few years ago. He believes that within the next ten years grocery distribution will be in the hands of chain stores and voluntary chains.

The Colored Merchants' Association is distinctly practical and has its feet on the ground. Its three primary objects are to organize the local retail grocers into a study club on modern selling, to study the Negro consumer, and to tie up with local jobbers and wholesalers. The results already attained have been striking. For example, Winston-Salem, which was the second city to organize, reports increased business and more rapid stock turnovers, with greater and quicker profits for the colored grocers. The C. M. A. stores, paying cash for their goods and securing larger discounts, are selling mostly for cash on their big days, Friday and Saturday. Eventually their whole business will be cash in both selling and buying. The rapid sale of advertised merchandise has aroused among national adver-

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tisers a real interest in the purchasing power of Negroes.

The association realizes that it must lead its members step by step to become prosperous business men. Mr. Holsey says:

> In order to give the grocers the necessary business for cooperative effort, an intensive study of modern merchandising methods is our first step. Evening meetings two or three times a week are arranged, and illustrated talks are given by experts. For example, in our Harlem campaign we were fortunate in having with us such men as Gorton James, editor of the *Business Week*; Robert F. Miller, vice-president, Associated Grocery Manufacturers; Wroe Alderson, J. W. Millard, and J. A. Jackson, of the Department of Commerce; Samuel Kirsh, legal specialist in trade associations; George C. Loomis, cashier, Dunbar National Bank; Carl W. Dipman, editor, and William L. Butler, associate editor, of the *Progressive Grocer*; and F. R. Snapp, assistant sales manager, Royal Baking Powder Company.

In the Harlem campaign a questionnaire also was prepared by the National Negro Business League and sent to a large number of Harlem housewives, asking their main reasons for not giving more of their patronage to Negro stores. The most common answer was insufficient variety of stock and higher prices, though a few women raised the question of convenient location. As a result, says Mr. Holsey:

> One thing that we have definitely undertaken is to impress upon the men that the day of mere sentiment in business departed with the old-fashioned corner grocery and that Negro housewives will not buy from Negro stores simply because they are operated by Negroes. We have made plain that the modern housewife, irrespective of race, does her shopping on the basis of quality, price, and service.

The Colored Merchants' Association began operations on this basis in Harlem in October, 1929. It has twenty-five member stores, including two model stores and a number of others that are rapidly making plans to become model stores. One of the remodeled groceries has increased a business of $400 or $500 a week to more than $1,200. These stores are succeeding in this time of business depression by showing to colored men better merchandising methods.

A recent survey of Negro business by the National Negro Business League shows that the race is much underorganized in the retail merchandising field, and those who are engaged in retail business are suffering because of inadequate training to cope with competition. The opportunities in this field would seem to be very wide; for the survey reveals that the Negroes' annual food bill is $1,650,000,000. To distribute this quantity of food a personnel of nearly 471,000 is required, divided thus: 727 major executives, at salaries ranging from $12,000 to $50,000 a year; 4,645 minor executives, at $5,000 to $15,000; 12,416 superintendents and foremen, at $3,000 to $5,000; 391,251 clerks and salespeople, at $1,000 to $3,000; and 61,749 drivers, messengers, and truck drivers, at $600 to $1,200.

The Business League has already spread this cooperative idea widely and is making plans for the further expansion of the C. M. A. stores. In this expansion program the league has had the whole-hearted support of the wholesale grocers—a situation which must be recognized as a new and important point of contact and cooperation for Negro business. If this project succeeds, it will mean at least a thousand more jobs for Negroes in the next few years.

In the Driftway

IT is only when a Lillian Leitzel falls or a famous clown grows old that we realize how enduring the circus ring is. Like a magic hoop it rolls on forever. And everything within it, animate or inanimate, shares its never-ending glamor, its persistent unreality. The circus is a mass affair, gaudy and spectacular, sentimental without shame as its golden trappings are obviously not gold. Here is no place for fastidiousness or intellectual pride. The first unabashed notes of the calliope send them scuttling. The circus is intemperate, resplendent with false splendor. Take it or leave it. Most of us take it. And the reason lies deep and secure. There is probably no single other medium which caters to a greater variety of human frailties or satisfies a wider range of human desires; which offers such complete relaxation from things as they are.

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ANIMALS come first, in any circus. The impossibility of giraffes, the sleek, now unavailing cunning of leopards, the hugeness of elephants, the agility of monkeys—here is an array that any emperor might envy, all caged and labeled for our pity and our delight. "Isn't it awful to put anything so fine and fierce as a lion in a cage?" we exclaim, thinking upon our own freedom (we are careful not to think too fiercely). "But then no doubt they get used to it. They have no consciousness." We pass on, preoccupied with popcorn and life in the jungle. We look deep into the eyes of the supercilious and ridiculous camel, searching for the fascination of deserts. And the Drifter, at least, always spends a long time with the ostrich. The Drifter often wishes that he could look as unrelievedly—though not as permanently—cranky as that ungainly bird. It might prove an excellent defense. As for the ostrich's reputed habit of hiding his head in the sand, why is it that humans regard that trick with such superiority and amusement? Is it because we are all so much more expert at the device than any ostrich could ever be?

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AND the sideshows! Here is the boldest, the crudest, the most canny form of showmanship. We are all cripples of a sort. Each carries about with him the knowledge of some defect. One is too plump, another is not beautiful enough, one is too tall, another too short. The ugliest man in the world, the fattest woman, the bearded lady, the giant, and the pigmy—these extremes induce a sense of normality beyond words soothing to the human spirit. Inside the big tent the clowns take us in hand. But the Drifter will not go into that. Like the ice barrier on which Byrd established Little America with so many and such frequent wave lengths, the secret of the success of clowns has been dwelt on too many times to need further comment.

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IT is when the show is actually on, of course, that the most subtle ministrations of the circus begin. And it is the "kinkers"—the acrobats—who perform them. On

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their trapezes and their tight ropes high above a solid earth they act out a dream of perfectibility. Defying space and gravity and human weakness they weave a fantasy of human infallibility. And the spectators? There are no spectators. Every last one of us, svelte and lithe and sheathed in silk, is swinging in space, walking on air, leaping to the backs of plunging white horses. There is not a flabby muscle, not an awkward limb, not a sagging knee in the whole tent. And over all the band plays, and the loudest voice in creation proclaims the biggest, the most amazing, the most stu-pendous show on earth.

* * * * *

LILLIAN LEITZEL, whirling at the top of the big tent, without even a net beneath to cast a doubt upon her perfection, spun out to its finest one of the shining threads by which men throw themselves toward the unattainable. For that she deserved the acclaim and the long roll of the drums that were always hers. And the manner of her death was not inappropriate. She was thrown to the earth because an iron ring, and not a human nerve, gave way.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

It Is Not a Bonus

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am much chagrined that *The Nation* should have published the two editorials Cash for the Veterans and The Bonus Raid.

In the first place, the word bonus is misleading for what has been properly and legislatively called adjusted compensation. The stipulated pay in the army was $30 per month and board. Qualified men within the age limits were compelled to enter the army regardless of their profession or earning capacity, and to take their chances of becoming cannon fodder or permanent inmates of hospitals. At the same time common laborers were receiving from $4 to $6 a day and mechanics from $6 to $10, with nearly unlimited overtime, which was not allowed in the service. Let the profiteers be left out of the reckoning.

After five years Congress enacted legislation providing compensation at the rate of $1 per day for service in this country and $1.25 per day for service overseas. But in spite of the fact that this compensation constituted wages for services rendered, and wages are recognized as having the first lien on capital in nearly all States of the Union, the federal government, on the advice of the Greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Hamilton, evaded responsibility by issuing certificates of indebtedness to the veterans, now worth only 22½ per cent of their face value with interest computed at 6 per cent. The face value, by the way, varies from about $30 to $1,789, not $1,000 to $2,000 as stated in your editorial.

"Hard-headed" business men foresee economic disaster if the veterans are paid now. But how foresighted are they? It was they who recommended the reduction of supertaxes to stimulate business. Yet general business went steadily down while stock brokerage went up until it was so topheavy it fell of its own weight. As for the forecasts of our perennial Secretary of the Treasury, in spite of his annual predictions of a deficit, the government has paid off $3,500,000,000 of United States bonds out of annual surpluses and returned to large corporations and wealthy individuals $1,250,000,000 in supposedly overpaid income taxes—although there is no doubt that the incomes were very carefully scrutinized by batteries of overpaid lawyers and underpaid accountants. Forecasts, in fact, have failed so repeatedly and completely that it would be safer to class them with dreams, mules, and weather predictions and go contrary.

As I see it, there is no proposal which would stimulate business so much as the liquidation by the government of its obligation to the veterans in small amounts that were due eleven years ago. The money would be distributed in almost every channel of trade, mainly through the lower strata of society, and afford relief from what will be a continued depression if heroic measures are not taken to change the business methods now operating in this country.

Philadelphia, February 15 F. W. BURGESS

On the Air

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Like the writer of *The Nation's* editorial On the Air, in the issue of February 11, I have scant patience with those who are patently abusing their radio wave-length privilege by constantly offending good taste and common sense with their advertising blatancies and fatuities. But I have even less patience with those who look to a government-owned-and-operated system of broadcasting, like the British Broadcasting Corporation, as the ideal for this country.

Karl Bickel, in the all-too-few chapters devoted to radio in his recent book, "New Empires," makes point of the necessity of maintaining the freedom of the air as zealously as we have sought to maintain the freedom of the press. To the credit of the private American radio enterprises—especially the two big national networks—be it said that they have thus far pursued rather astute policies in their handling of discussions of public affairs via their microphones. They have given rather good breaks to all sides of big public questions in their Half-Hours in the Nation's Capital, National Radio Forum, and like "editorial" features, considering the limitations of time and the congested wave lengths and the well-known preferences of the average American audience.

I know of at least one instance where a radio representative had to go to the mat—and won out, too—with high-placed officialdom seeking to bulldoze him into withdrawing the opportunity he gave a well-known and eminent liberal leader to go on the air. Not even Senator Norris, the man most of us newspapermen admire and respect above all others on Capitol Hill, has had occasion to complain about his treatment at the hands of radio.

But I wander afield. My point is that private enterprise (which is only now beginning to reap the fruits of blind and expensive venturing into what a few years ago was a highly unpromising commercial field) is conducting and can conduct broadcasting far more independently and unrestrainedly than would a governmentally, and hence politically, controlled and operated monopoly.

Radio is a natural adjunct of the press, but only a few farsighted publishers have realized this—some of them to their financial profit, too, during this last year, when advertising lineage went way down while radio "space" sold in higher quantity and at higher premium than ever. I should like to see the American press control radio, but, unhappily, our publishers just won't seem to awaken to the fact that the audible and the visual media of conveying intelligence and entertainment are natural kinsfolk.

Washington, February 7 MARTIN CODEL

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The Bright Lights

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Much as I enjoyed Douglas Haskell's irony in The Bright Lights, in your issue of January 14, I should like to see a blunter challenge to a profession which can so triumphantly divert any but a frontal attack. Of course the important cleavage between the modern architecture of Europe and America is not along the line of acceptance or rejection of nature, but along that of clear or befuddled thinking. European architecture is seeking, and I think finding, a defined intellectual basis, while American architecture is toying with romantic stage sets. It is a common misconception to assume that American architecture is intellectual because a large amount of specialized knowledge is required in its production. For all its impressive structural and mechanical paraphernalia, it remains quite without rational intellectual basis as that is understood by such European thinkers as Oud, Gropius, Le Corbusier, and others, and as it has been understood by significant architectural creators in the past.

Is it not amusing that the people which prides itself on being preeminently practical and hard-headed lapses inevitably into sentimentality wherever art is concerned?

San Francisco, January 31 Irving F. Morrow

That New Party

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I sincerely hope that your editorial on A Party for the People in your issue of January 28 is typical of liberal opinion. Your expression of the facts that a new party must be founded on the interests of the producing masses and that these masses must recognize that their interests are in conflict with the interests of the owning class is a clear recognition of the class struggle. The failure heretofore on the part of most liberals to recognize the class struggle as the dominant factor in our political life has been the most serious barrier to complete cooperation between liberals and Socialists.

Cambridge, Mass., January 30 Alfred Baker Lewis

An Important Conference

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The International Conference on the World Economic Crisis to be held in Paris April 14, 15, and 16 under the auspices of the Women's International League promises to be very interesting. William Martin, of the *Journal de Genève* and of the International Labor Office, is one of the speakers who has promised to take part, and among the other speakers who are expected are M. Quesnay, director of the International Bank at Basle, and Mr. Keynes and Mr. Wise, of London. Mr. Charles Rist has been proposed as leader of the discussions. It may be remembered that he was concerned with the stabilization of Austrian currency.

The committee in charge of arrangements is anxious to secure the nomination of delegates or representatives from organizations which would naturally be interested in such a conference. Moreover, anyone whose interest lies in this field and who is planning to be in Europe at the time is urged to attend. Further information may be secured from the Women's International League, 1805 H Street N. W., Washington, D. C.

Washington, February 14 Emily G. Balch

Contributors to This Issue

Paul Y. Anderson is the national correspondent of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch.*

W. A. S. Douglas is the Chicago correspondent of the Baltimore *Sun.*

H. M. Foster is former food editor of the New York *Journal of Commerce.*

Eugene Lohrke is the author of "Deep Evening," a novel to be published in the spring.

John Collier is the executive secretary of the American Indian Defense Association, Inc.

Matthew Josephson is the author of "Portrait of the Artist as American."

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Books, Art, Music, Drama

Praise

By MARK VAN DOREN

Praise is no crust of snow
That fell long since and formed,
And now one day will enter the shut earth—
Stale wine, and warmed.

Praise is directest rain
That comes when it is needed—
Cool in its newness, and descending where
Desire has seeded.

Praise is merest water—
Nothing, but enough.
Nor makes it any choice of how it feeds
Smooth ground or rough.

Praise falls on both alike,
And is at once beloved.
There is no good that is not prospered then—
Nor evil proved.

Counterblast

[*In its issue of February 18* The Nation *printed an article by Isidor Schneider called The Fetish of Simplicity, in which Mr. Schneider pointed to what were in his opinion the unfortunate effects of the self-consciously bare and simple writing of the "Hemingway school." As one novelist who exemplified the "unnaturalness of the new technique" he cited Josephine Herbst, "a writer with definite narrative gifts. But to know how genuine and abundant are these gifts one should hear her tell a story." In her conversation, Mr. Schneider remarked, Miss Herbst is "unashamedly rhetorical," but when she sits down to write she is "overcome by scruples" and avoids the literary effects that she uses naturally in her speech. "As a result, her novels have not realized to the full her narrative powers." Below is Miss Herbst's reply.*—LITERARY EDITOR THE NATION.]

Key West, February 18

DEAR ISIDOR SCHNEIDER: Kind neighbors who are always on hand with bad news brought me copies of *The Nation* and the *World* with Hansen's copy of your article in the former paper. I can only speak for myself and am somewhat confused by the term "Hemingway school." Do you mean by this the same classification that Malcolm Cowley made in his article entitled The New Primitives? You appear however to be working from the outside while Cowley took their attitude toward life as his basis for the grouping. He included writings of E. E. Cummings, John Dos Passos, Hemingway, John Herrmann, Nathan Asch, and myself and nameless others. From what you say, it seems to me you have chosen arbitrarily only certain writings which will fit in most with your fetish idea of simplicity. They are all external qualifications and reinforce my notion that you are more concerned with the skin than the juice of the fruit. To refer to a conversation we had on the subject of Proust, I remember your saying that you liked him best when you were most conscious of his prose, and the passages relating to tastes and smells, to the place-names were your favorites. Much as I might enjoy the same passages, they failed to impress me in that way and I was most moved when I completely forgot his style, when the substance itself seemed to leap at me and turn me cold. That passage where Swann calls on the Duc and Duchesse de Guermante as they are about to step out to a party, she is wearing the wrong kind of shoes and he keeps nagging at her to go put on the right pair while she stands there half listening to why Swann cannot go to Italy with her, the reason being, as he manages to inject into the talk, that he is going to die. The Duc, refusing to be uncomfortable or to have his party spoiled, puffs this away as nonsense and the entire frivolity of their world is at the moment more stark and grim than Swann's approaching end. There are no metaphors, no involved figures in this part, and, in fact, the most impressive parts of Proust for me are those where his language is direct and deals quite concretely with incident. The power that the incident has to evoke emotional responses may depend on the reader as much as the writer and I must conclude that such is the case when you deny emotional attributes to the kind of writing under discussion and even claim the writers themselves are uninterested in it. If you mean false emotional effects, you are quite right, but if you mean emotion as an element to be felt by the reader and courted by the writer by his selection of incident, I do not see how you can deny it to "A Farewell to Arms" or to my own "Nothing Is Sacred." If you do deny it, many people must find something you have not found. If the emotional response was entirely ruled out, why did reviewers all over the country without prompting from any blurb, mention the emotional qualities of my book or if they did not actually use that word, how did they come by exactly the emotion I intended to evoke? The same is not true of "Money for Love." It seems to me the only work of mine to fall under your definition of the type of writing you undertake to discuss. I wrote it deliberately with the intent of discovering just how far a rigid acceptance of a certain method would take me. I never liked the book, do not like it now, and have always considered it pinched. But the people were pared to the bone, not to be realistic or natural, as you claim, but to suggest an even completer bareness of life than the actuality of the characters could portray. I believe you assume too much when you conclude that the end and aim of *my* writing, at least, is to be natural. Frankly I think it is quite unimportant, to be natural or not to be, to use colloquialisms or not to use them, so long as you attain what you set out to attain. In "Money for Love" and in a story called "Once a Year" I meant to get an overtone that would be more convincing than "reality." I succeeded so well that I never want to do this sort of thing again. But in adhering to this method I was under no compulsion to exalt "simplicity" but to attain a certain end. The machinery dominated the content in this case, and not by chance. I believe such a procedure always fails although Flaubert would never admit his "Madame Bovary" was superior to his polished and limited later works. I know of no one among the actively creative writers of this group who considers "simplicity" an end or who would sacrifice anything to it. It seems to me your complaint has more to do with reviewers who pick up words for convenient labels and toss them back and forth to one another. (They, not the writers, have made a fetish of simplicity.) Certainly when a critic can see only simplicity in the writings you have undertaken to discuss and nothing more, I should say the point of view was very limited. I believe that there is much more of a menace in loose criticism today than in the writings of the group you label "Hemingway." Your very use of Hemingway's name as a complete and comprehensive

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label for a group of people, many of whom were writing in the identical manner they employ today, before Hemingway was known, proves what I mean. I begin to understand very clearly why Hemingway had to write a cruel parody of Sherwood Anderson in order to rid himself of the burden of that name. I would be the last person in the world to deny the influence of Hemingway on my writing. He is a very excellent writer and I would be a fool if I did not read him to advantage. The same can be said for the writings of Stephen Crane, James Joyce, Ring Lardner, and Sherwood Anderson. I am quite certain that if "The Open Boat" by Stephen Crane appeared in print today for the first time it would be jumped on by a dozen athletic critics and Crane would be dubbed a "Hemingway follower." I have at my hand "A Sportsman's Sketches" by Turgenev and I am shocked to discover on page after page typical Hemingway dialogue. I am afraid Chekhov was also under the influence as I see some of the same repetitive effects in much of his conversation. Balzac was a writer with a monotonous, if not declarative, sentence structure and he was sloppy with grammar. He liked to write in the language of the day rather than the high literary tongue in vogue at the time, and I don't doubt this was due to the Hemingway influence. But oh, oh, the worst is this dreadful thing of Joyce. In his story "The Dead" I am afraid he has copied almost word for word, or certainly emotion for emotion, the end of "A Woman of Andros." This is all very sad and goes to prove that no one is strictly original, not even Joyce. Unfortunately we are born in a world that is full of influences and of young men and women who have used the word "swell" on and off the stage for well-nigh twenty years. Considering the vast numbers of people who have used that word as well as many hardier and tougher and the comparative few who could read "The Sun Also Rises," even assuming it was a best-seller, I should say that some other influence than a book was at work in the world, and Hemingway merely showed a genius for seeping up the life of his time, something usually considered laudatory, especially after a writer is dead.

Looking the thing straight in the face, I must say I do not understand why you are making a scare head of this group of writers, a very small group compared with the many who are at it, and a group whose pooled successes would be a very small part of the big successes of the day. You have the nervousness of the Mr. Palmers of the world who nose out alarming symptoms in harmless minorities. The Mr. Joneses of the world are a poor lot if they cannot draw down a single Nobel prize or a single book-club selection and where only one of their number is, so far as I know, a best-seller. (And only one commercial magazine that I know of welcomes their work.) It seems to me that in selecting this group for an alarmist pogrom you have taken the wrong bull by the horns. I nominate the reviewers and critics, whose confused and bungling efforts are doing more to confound the budding writer than any example of actual creative work. But even at that, why show such concern for budding writers? Those that have anything to say will go right on saying it; those that have not will go on writing reviews. Those who live by imitation will fall as always by the wayside, and I cannot see that it is important whether they fall by imitating Mr. Marcel Proust, Mr. William Carlos Williams, or Mr. Ernest Hemingway. Even those who have something to say of their own must be prepared for the club on the head as soon as that head emerges from the water, and it is well to be prepared and to know that the literary game, so far as niceness is concerned, is about on the level of Al Capone's operations in Chicago. Writers are supposed to sit quietly back and to take what is handed to them and it is well if they can do that. Reading backwards, it seems to me that Defoe, Fielding, Balzac, Stendhal, to name a few, were too much engaged in wranglings with their critics. They never drew the choice plums of the Thornton Wilders. I think it is a significant thing that the "Hemingway group," as you so uncomprehensively call them, have never developed a critic. It is a temptation better to forego. Another book is the soft answer and a pile of books turneth away wrath.

JOSEPHINE HERBST

Men in Ships

The Kaiser's Coolies. By Theodor Plivier. Translated from the German by Margaret Green. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

FOR reasons that are not at all obvious, the point of view of the average sailor during the late Great War has been lost amid the bewildering multitude of vociferations and outcries which, with a thin strain of sheer poetry and some very solid prose achievements, make up the body of war literature. "The Kaiser's Coolies" is the first effective and vivid challenge to this silence.

The spirit of its conception is commonplace enough, since it is merely an outcome of that fatigue and disillusion which thoughtful people are forced to accept as a natural consequence of four years of organized destruction on land, sea, and in the air, but the method is startling and unique, and the material is both dreadful and beautiful. No consequence in individual ignominy and suffering can quite blot out the majestic display of forces that attends an engagement between modern battle fleets. Ordinary human values dwindle to nothing beside the appalling effects of the striking and murderous power of the mechanically directed human brain. The planets in their regular orbits seem to move with scarcely less precision to purposes hardly less inhuman. Mathematical formulas possess, stunningly, the power of life and death, and speaking through the smoke of their own destruction, the great guns reduce time to nothing and space to a mere matter of sighting and elevation.

The result is not here the question, except in the nerve-racked and acid disillusion which, whether in war or in peace, is the bitter negation of all the promised glories of the mechanical age; and for the artist who can render the picture the moral values must remain as truly subsidiary in war as in peace. This Plivier is aware of, and he is content to paint his picture, rendering to giantism its due, to the battles of the machines their full measure of smoky and mathematical glory, to the great fleets under steam the ignominious majesty of their purposes, and to the men who serve in them the necessary bitterness of their fate. Lacking in all ordinary richness of style, his crude, flimsy prose takes strength from the lean force of his own conviction, and his battle of Jutland, where the major fleets of Germany and England were engaged in a long running battle, is assuredly one of the remarkable prose epics that the Great War has produced. Beyond that it is useless to go. There are pages in "The Kaiser's Coolies" of sheer boredom and monotony, for the book ranges over the whole scene of four years' life in the imperial navy. But whenever the great machines spring to life they speak effectively, to a more wide-ranging purpose, perhaps, than they have ever spoken before.

> The impacts approached nearer. The jets of water they threw up were of a poisonous green and yellow at the base, gleaming white at the summit. When they received a direct hit the steel bodies vibrated and reverberated like strange, gigantic musical instruments. Suddenly the wind played on the steel shrouds as on a harp. A tall wave dashed over the bows. It was a summer afternoon, and the sea was transparent like green glass.

This is prose without beauty; but the beauty that is pitiful and terrible comes to light between the harsh shadows of the

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lines, and the men in the ships are nothing and the ships and guns are all. Plivier's style lacks the grace to raise his epic at all times to perfection. It is black-and-white drawing with a leaning toward the macabre and grotesque. But that again is a question of taste and definition; and here is a book which is as effective as a caricature by Daumier, and that, perhaps, is enough.

EUGENE LÖHRKE

Exploiting the Indian

Massacre. A Review of Today's American Indian. By Robert Gessner. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $3.

"MASSACRE" is extraordinary in its positive values. There is no book like it dealing with the American Indian, and there has been none since Helen Hunt Jackson wrote her "Century of Dishonor," fifty years ago. Mr. Gessner has assembled an indictment of the Indian-affairs system which rolls like a storm-wind through four hundred pages. The storm-wind continues to blow, inasmuch as this is a down-to-the-minute book which treats the President Hoover Indian regime as a continuation of its predecessors. Mr. Gessner has lived among the Chippewas of Minnesota, has journeyed among the Wisconsin and Dakota tribes, and has assembled the records dealing with all the tribes and with Indian Bureau practices at Washington. He dedicates his book "to the first Congress that will eradicate what Lincoln seventy years ago called 'an accursed system.'" He calls for a crusade, and his book is a crusade.

Mr. Gessner is twenty-four years old, and his book, philosophically and aesthetically, is immature. There is a weakening overemphasis at many points. There is some crassness of imagery, and too much consciously fine writing. There is naivete about the things government can or should do. There is an immature view of Indian human nature. True, for example, some Indian women do carry their babies papoose-like on their shoulders. The circumstance does not prove that the Indian Bureau has failed in its duty toward the Indians. The government, indeed, has not "educated the Indian into a Caucasian." Unfortunately, the government has tried, and still tries. Indian depravity, whether or not caused by the government, reaches no such average depths as Mr. Gessner suggests, and Indian virtue did not pass from the earth with Sitting Bull. There are pages in "Massacre" which are reminiscent of "Mother India," but of "Mother India" with an inverted application.

These are minor criticisms. Dealing with the system of Indian affairs, Mr. Gessner combines a documentation usually adequate with a swiftly moving and at times a breathless narrative. The values are true and the facts are supported. Mr. Gessner correctly derives the Indian Bureau system from the federal statutes and Indian Bureau regulations which have systematized the exploitation of Indian property. He utilizes the classic report of the Institute for Government Research, issued in 1928, along with the eleven volumes of hearings of the Senate Indian Investigation Committee and a multitude of Indian Bureau and Congressional documents. Nearly, though not quite, always he stays within the documented evidence and within facts not controverted.

Noteworthy and adequate chapters deal with the Flathead power-site struggle, and with the continuing scandals of the Klamath Reservation, whose Indians are taxed by the Indian Bureau a per capita amount that would mean, if applied to the whole United States, an annual tax budget of twenty-five billion dollars. The struggles over Pueblo lands and Pueblo water rights are brilliantly and accurately narrated. The swift melting away of the Indian estate, through actions by Congress and the Indian Bureau, is portrayed with details from records not disputed. The cumulative breakdown of the Indian Bureau's irrigation and reclamation system is depicted, and the author discusses adequately the $42,000,000 reimbursable debt placed by the Indian Bureau and Congress on the tribes and allotted Indians—a debt still rapidly mounting, and represented by few tangible benefits.

A hundred pages of "Massacre" are devoted to the Indian Bureau's boarding-schools. The record is a horrible one—past and present—and is thoroughly sustained by documents. Inasmuch as the boarding-schools are being increased and are at present more overcrowded than heretofore, and the forcible abduction of children from their homes to overcrowd the boarding-schools is being continued, Mr. Gessner's indictment has instant relevancy. The chapters on Indian health are distressing because true. Mr. Gessner asserts, for example, that the Wisconsin Indian death-rate from tuberculosis is forty times greater than that of the general population of Wisconsin and that "the Menominee tribe, 100 per cent under Indian Bureau control, has the highest tuberculosis death-rate of any group of human beings—2,540 per 100,000 per year." His authority is the Institute for Government Research.

Toward his last chapters Mr. Gessner outlines various programs for Indian relief. His constructive pages are sound and suggestive but not exhaustive. His description, on page 408, of the existent denials of civil liberty to Indians is rigidly accurate and yet difficult for the unfamiliar mind to credit. None who read the book as a whole will doubt that the government's 250,000 Indian wards are essentially serfs, valued by the government not as human lives but as justifications for the exploitation of properties still huge though fast dwindling.

All in all, the book has no competitor, and it does accomplish a literary synthesis of facts as strange as any in human society, gathered by many agencies through the last ten years. It proves the continuing dominion of statutes enacted to despoil a helpless race, and of administrative policies derived from unexampled and bloodthirsty statutes. It charges that the present officers of the Indian Bureau have yielded to the "system" and are working against legislative reform. It is, throughout, specific. A rejoinder by the Indian Bureau, equally specific, would appear to be mandatory.

JOHN COLLIER

Lafcadio Hearn

Blue Ghost: A Study of Lafcadio Hearn. By Jean Temple. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.50.

CONSISTENTLY unfortunate in his biographers, poor Lafcadio Hearn has won at length a more adequate and intelligent interpretation than heretofore in Mrs. Jean Temple's short study of his career. Since our chief sources of knowledge in this field have been, first, a voluminous, partisan work by a never-attained sweetheart (Mrs. Bisland), second, a poisonous one by an outraged friend (Gould), third, a pedestrian and trivial newspaperman's, (Tinker), fourth, that of book speculators who piously believed that Hearn would become "as legendary a figure as Poe," one would think it time for a compendious and rigid labor of old-fashioned German pedantry, filled with authenticated, documentary evidence, and with balance clearly drawn. But perhaps Mrs. Temple was right in confining herself to an "impression" of Lafcadio. On careful examination his deficiencies glare at one, his letters seem more often petty than philosophic. Dr. Gould of Philadelphia, who was for a time his patron, may have been himself puritanical and rather limited; he grew enraged at Hearn's

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softness, and, I have sometimes thought, with good cause. Hearn was certainly a "mysterious figure"; but it would have been better for his immortal future if he had been more so.

Unhappy immigrant and waif, he was during twenty years an American artist engulfed in the cave-man years of 1870 to 1890. We know that he impersonated the romantic and individualistic revolt against middle-class social life, with much attendant scandal. But what of his place as a man of letters, which Mrs. Temple estimates so high?

After all, the Greek-Irish wanderer was but a distant outpost, perhaps unconsciously, of the later phase of French romanticism. If he had stayed in Paris, we should have been able to tuck him away in the annals of French literature among twenty charming and minor writers of the *fin du siècle* era. In our own turbulent States, with no literary conversation, no "schools" of poetry, no Latin Quarter, no academies even, he was a sad anomaly. I use the term romanticism as a popular convenience; this movement in art, from the period of Rousseau to that of Delacroix and Baudelaire, made vigorous and truthful contributions. For its later phase, Hearn, who was quite cosmopolitan, may stand as being as representative as anyone else.

"He put too much importance to Beauty or Nicety perhaps," Hearn's Japanese wife commented, at the end, in her halting but shrewd English. "He was too enthusiastic for beauty, for which he wept and for which he rejoiced and for which he was angry." The sense of beauty overpowered him always as in a swoon or a dream. Its drama was associated poignantly with some dim race-memory and with an "Oedipus complex" as well, as Mrs. Temple plausibly suggests. His response was always in the monotone of rapture and trance. Myopic and disfigured, he sought always the colors and scents of the tropical zones; but are not the greatest masters of color drawn from north of the line of latitude of New York?

The profound weakness of his style, from which we have severely turned ourselves away, is perceptible in such a passage as the following, describing the sounds emitted by a Chinese gong:

> The gong glimmered pale and huge and yellow like the moon rising over a Southern swamp. My friend tapped its ancient face with a drumstick, and it commenced to sob, like waves upon a low beach. He tapped it again, and it moaned like the wind in a mighty forest of pines. Again, and it commenced to roar, and with each tap the roar grew deeper and deeper, till it seemed like thunder rolling over an abyss in the Cordilleras . . .

We trust the simile of waves on a beach; we accept that of a forest of evergreens; but when we come to "thunder rolling over an abyss in the Cordilleras," we halt. Now poor Lafcadio had never, in all his travels, visited the Cordilleras of the Andes; he had only *read* about them, as of the thousand and one perfumes, drugs, beverages, plants with which he fills his pages, to achieve thereby only a total effect of neutralization. And we end by recoiling angrily from such artistic insincerity. But what of Marlowe and Shakespeare and Keats, and so many other great artificers? the reader will protest. It was *in spite* of such extravagant devices, we would maintain, that Marlowe and his fellows were successful. In them the sound and fury, the debauchery of rhetoric, convinces us; whereas Hearn's exoticism is couched in an impoverished prose, flaccid and pale, accented by the single, short breath and monosyllabic language of a monotonous sentence structure. Going back toward the purer springs of English prose rhythm, how much greater variety and life we may find in any single page of Laurence Sterne, where each sentence seems to start off in a different direction, or strike a different tone, while holding bravely to the central design of the work.

But the late romantics who so greatly vitiated the good work of Rousseau, Madame de Staël, and Chateaubriand gave rise in turn to a deadly satirist of the twentieth century, who ridiculed them into limbo. This was Guillaume Apollinaire, whose chief sport was to punctuate his resonant and ironical verses with exotic nouns discovered in old American mail-order catalogues, which he devoured at leisure in the cafes of Montparnasse. Thus we find in his poems rivers with beautiful Indian names mingled with foliage that grows only in the Fleas' Market of Paris. It was the wild clownery of Apollinaire as much as anything else that brought low the pretentious symbolists, or late romantics.

Lafcadio Hearn becomes an even more shadowy figure in the last ten years of his life, the period of his Oriental adventure in Japan. Farther from English speech, his art scarcely improved after the West Indian phase. And Mrs. Temple, too, grows more vague and lyrical at once in dwelling on this phase of his "life on an old fan." The fruits of these years were chiefly his work in folklore, though it was poorly organized, and his last book, "Japan: An Interpretation." Shaking off his inferiority complex he became, on the whole, a better man, and even a better thinker. "Japan" is a valuable introduction to the Orient, one agrees; but the mixture of Spencer's synthetic philosophy with Buddhist mysticism is intrinsically a poor marriage. His love and knowledge of Japan were both greatly qualified. And as for us, poor sodden Occidentals, we often wonder in our ignorance whether Japan may have been the best possible gateway to Oriental ideas. Was not Japan the first to break away from the old moorings, to Lafcadio's eternal chagrin?

The picturesque story of Hearn has been pieced together with good taste, as well as enthusiasm, in Mrs. Temple's study. However, we should like to see a great confirmed skeptic, if he had the patience, go over the whole disputed ground.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

Notes on Fiction

Our Gods Are Not Born. By Charles R. Walker. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.

This volume of short stories is worthy of praise for its attempt to write about Americans affected by America and to do this with the simpler things taken for granted. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Walker's way of seeing and writing keeps the attempt from being successful. The writing strives too hard for a needless indirection and creates complication and subtlety not implicit in the material by going round about it with many words and careful vagueness. The same inflation that he gives to emotions of no very great interest Mr. Walker gives to characters of no great significance. He sees them hurt by America and their time, and remains blinded by his verbal inflation to the fact that they are merely unintelligent and hysterical.

Oklahoma Town. By George Milburn. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

These are not short stories. Or if they are, they are short stories in the one valid and legitimate sense of that form, being extraordinarily vivid sketches, running only a few pages each, wherein the character or the simple situation is treated with an economy and realism of touch which we cannot sufficiently praise. One thinks in comparison of Sherwood Anderson, whose name and technique will undoubtedly be mentioned in connection with those of Mr. Milburn; one thinks of all that Chekhovian plumbing and peering into the shabby lives and sorry souls of a few impossible people; and in recalling Mr. Anderson and others who have dealt with much

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the same milieu, one feels like hailing Mr. Milburn as something very like a new genius. The author is still extremely young, and his apprenticeship for the writing of these remarkable tales of small-town life has been that of bumming the country from coast to coast and acting as bus-boy on a banana boat plying the Gulf route. Of these stories God Smote a Shoemaker, Mabel Barclay, Banker Brigham, Clark Peavey, and the poignant sketch which closes the volume, Hail and Farewell, are perhaps the most appealing. They are, by the same token, extremely cruel. That milk of human kindness recently extolled by Mr. Chesterton as being so abundant in the Middle West is strangely absent from these incisive and rather heartless tales. We admire them extremely, and trust that their author will soon produce a novel as good as almost any one of them.

Festival. By Struthers Burt. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

Mr. Burt's latest novel is distinguished by a prose that is of a rich Meredithian texture and by a deal of tortured and tortuous thinking on many subjects—chiefly nationality, sex, love, America, nature. For his central figure is a man who, having recently retired as president of a big Philadelphia bank, thinks his way along gropingly in the reflective world where he has so long wished to live. His mind is like a slow flame which never destroys in a great conflagration but which licks about such subjects as his desire for a place of his own with a garden, his wife who is so cool and untouchable, his idyllic platonic love affair of many years' standing with Elsie Holt, and most of all his daughter married to an Italian prince and not quite happy. Indeed, it licks about everything that comes its way. But in the end Dorn Griffiths accepts defeat when he accepts from the President an ambassadorship to Italy. He must go back into harness. The secondary story of the Princess Rezzonica, her husband, and her American lover is more exciting but less powerful. Mr. Burt has written a fine and mature study which seems, however, in the end to come to precisely nothing. One comes out by the same door where in one went, as the conflicting thoughts and emotions cancel one another. But one has had a stimulating experience on the way.

Music

Stravinsky

MR. KOUSSEVITZKY has recently given us performances of the Stravinsky "Capriccio" and of the "Symphonie de Psaumes." They throw the strange history of this strangest of composers into vivid relief against the background of other contemporary composers whose works we have been hearing.

Sibelius, who has had a burst of recognition from all quarters this season, with performances of two symphonies, two symphonic poems, and a violin concerto; Loeffler, whose seventieth birthday was recently celebrated with performances of his "Pagan Poem" in New York, Boston, and Cleveland; Elgar and Bloch, represented on recent programs by an "Introduction and Allegro" and the "Schelomo" rhapsody, respectively—these are men who have been interested more in the perfection than in the originality of their idioms, who have grown naturally and non-violently out of the music of the past. Although none of them is a slavish imitator of his predecessors, none has been very deeply concerned with individualizing his style by technical innovation. These men are prophets or poets, in the same sense that their forerunners were. Their importance is personal rather than historical; it lies in the content of their music itself rather than in new roads of expression opened for followers to travel on.

Contrast them, then, with the portrait of Stravinsky as "a commercial genius, a kind of musical bank director," drawn by Leonid Sabaneyeff in his admirable book "Modern Russian Composers." "Stravinsky's fame," he writes, "is based not only on his musical gifts . . . but chiefly on his virtuosity in making full use of musical conditions and taking full account of fashions and fads, those two wavering and changing elements on which, nevertheless, fame in one's lifetime almost exclusively depends. . . . Stravinsky is immeasurably more a genius of musical business than purely of music." The old virtues, Sabaneyeff says with a bitterness not quite concealed, are out of date; *épater les bourgeois* has become the aim of the modern composer. And since Stravinsky has had unequaled success in startling the musical world into frightened admiration and imitation, he has become the most brilliant figure of our time. This is a very civilized way of crying "humbug," which is what many less brilliant critics than Sabaneyeff have been crying all along.

But is Stravinsky nothing but a splendid mountebank? It is not difficult, at any rate, to see how that impression arose. Early in his career (in 1911, and he is only in his forty-ninth year now) he had poked good-humored but devastating fun, in "Petrouchka," at most of the music that had preceded him. Two years later he shook the foundations of the musical world with "Le Sacre du Printemps," a work of the utmost imaginable rhythmic, harmonic, and orchestral radicalism. There followed a series of works that jumped from one tendency to another in bewildering and apparently aimless succession: "Les Noces," continuing the primitivism of the "Sacre"; "L'Histoire du Soldat," an acid miniature; the Sonata and the Concerto for piano, combining elements of jazz with a "return to Bach," a still acidulous combination; "Oedipus," an oratorio for male chorus and orchestra with soloists, borrowing liberally from Handel, Verdi, Wagner, and many others; "Le Baiser de la Fée," a ballet acknowledging Stravinsky's debt to Tschaikowsky, at the moment when the stock of that very romantic and unmodern master had fallen to its lowest point.

Through them all runs an uncanny talent for the unexpected. Through them all, though, I think, the skilful hand of this unique genius has been pretty clearly visible. And now it seems probable that his wanderings have brought him to something that can be understood and enjoyed even in the light of the traditions he once made such brilliant efforts to destroy. For in the light-hearted "Capriccio" the irony of parts of the Concerto seems completely abandoned. And the "Symphonie de Psaumes," inscribed (doubtless with something less than complete piety) "to the glory of God," seems at first hearing a sincere and moving work. Nor has Stravinsky's unique technical mastery apparently suffered while he has been off on his ironical pilgrimages.

As the distance that separates us from those once enigmatic works increases, I think there is little doubt that we shall be less and less concerned with the motives that inspired them. Beethoven, too, played practical jokes, but today we have to have them pointed out to us. Even when, driven by a need to shock his friends, or by who knows what Dostoevskian urge toward self-destruction, Stravinsky perhaps tried his hardest to conceal, even deform, his virtuosity, it was never successfully hidden. "Oedipus" (which the League of Composers will present in April) is the one work of Stravinsky with which I have not yet been able to feel any real contact; but I think no one could ever have attributed it to anyone else.

The significance of his music has for a long time been overshadowed by its audacity. But if, as seems probable, he has again arrived at the point where his music is as important

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intrinsically as historically, it cannot be long before what Sabaneyeff a trifle grudgingly admits, will be generally and freely recognized: "However one may evaluate Stravinsky's repeatedly and bizarrely changing style, he undoubtedly constitutes an era in musical art. . . . At present he is the most resplendent and significant figure of contemporary life."

ARTHUR MENDEL

Art

Collectivistic Images

THE object most sharply revealed by the great collection of Russian icons recently on view in the public museums of Boston and of New York, and now in transit among other American treasuries, is Russia herself. These delicate and majestic images unveil a body of prime work hitherto obscured and neglected in churches and convents and lately given the world under Soviet patronage: a whole unknown province of painting roughly related to that of the Italian primitives, but individually exquisite, and startlingly concordant with the modern movement. Still, the sovereign impression of these accurate copies and skilfully cleaned originals is that of a racial, national, and social identity. Six centuries are represented in them, and the labors of various schools, regions, and individuals. The Byzantine influence persists strongly in certain ones; in others, barbaric and Mongolian traits appear. Individual examples of the Stroganoff period suggest, if not the magnetism, at least the touch of profane Western art. And still, amid their almost bewildering splendor, one stands in the presence of a strangely homogeneous expression.

Stemming directly from the traditions of the mosaicists and image-makers of Constantinople, these golden and hieratic symbols are nevertheless inconformable with their Byzantine ancestors. One could not fancy even the most inlay-like of them figuring in San Vitale or Torcello, for example. The drawing is both awkward and vigorous; the coloring somber and strong. At the same time, these paintings exhibit a development ultimately inconsistent with Italian art from Duccio onward. They are non-naturalistic. Chiaroscuro plays no role in them. Their technique is sheerly coloristic: the organization of pure and lacquer-like pigment for the purpose of isolating and communicating form. But neither are these icons Oriental. While it has been alleged that their dominant color scale is "to be matched in Chinese, Korean, and Persian ceramics," it is evident that the particular shades and combinations of color are distinctive. Besides, it has recently been established by the head of the Restoration Workshop in Moscow that, far from being the result of abstract ideals and definite types of artistic taste, the recurrent harmonies are directly borrowed from the landscapes amid which the paintings were made.

Hence, while this collection does not represent all Russian icon painting—the present writer remembers seeing, in Cologne in the summer of 1929, an impressive loan exhibit of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century images manifestly produced under the influence of Western classicism—its communication of a single, constant root is none the less overpoweringly persuasive. From the first moment of reception one feels Russia herself about one in all her peculiarity: not medieval Russia nor present-day Russia, but the inveterate reality from which sovietism logically developed. Amid these objects of worship we are deep in a world aboriginally communistic, inherently indifferent to the individual, consistently placing greatest worth on the collective life. It comes to us directly,

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through the manner, the spirit, of this art. One knows it, strangely enough, in the pervasive sense of unearthliness and disembodied spirituality. Indications of volume and tri-dimensionality meet us. But this art is flat; hot of blood but bare of the grand tactility and materiality of the chief Italian primitives—Giotto, for great example; without the very reverent but none the less massive palpation of the flesh. There is organization, but little of Massaccio's dynamic movement. All is staticity, supernaturalism, ideality.

One knows it again in other absences of the pagan affirmation of the world. The slender forms of the expiring Saviors in these icons are infinitely warm, tender, compassionate: their sacrifice for the sake of man's guilty soul is profoundly felt. But the passionate, almost fierce embrace as of all nature, all creation, expressed in the massive expansive form of the crucified on Nicolo Pisano's baptistry pulpit, say, is lacking. Perhaps it is mere Italian melodrama we miss; still, the possibility is slight. A distinct feeling of resignation flows from all the figures, supernormal virgins, archangels, and saints. Weary, knowing, pitiful, the heavenly host have no power over this world. Life is suffering; the passions are brutal. Gravely admonitory, they move the heart to gentleness, worship, humility. The strong traditionalism reinforces the lesson of the flatness, staticity, resignation. Types of form and expression are repeated through the centuries. Experiment is evident, but not abundantly.

Our intuitions are not awry. These traits are really indicative of the fact that the hidden form-giver of this body of art, the unconscious agent of variation from the cast and manner of Italian primitive painting, is to a great extent an appreciation of mutual adjustment and a depreciation of individual adaptation. Fantastic as it may appear, the tactility of the forms in a work of art does indeed constitute an exaltation of the individual will; material touch, direct contact, apparently being the basis of individual adjustment. The broad materiality of Western art, the fierce sympathy with the whole of creation implied in it, actually sanctions the demonic as well as the altruistic elements of the personality, accepting them as agents of a greater good. Conversely, the immateriality and remoteness of forms would seem to reject the individual will, exalting mutual functions and desires; the spirit of resignation, of forbearance, of compassion preparing the road for selflessness, tenderness, and the other social feelings. So, too, traditionalism, and the authority of the priests and elders of the tribe. And while it is probable that the artists themselves were unaware of the bearing of their techniques, it is perfectly conceivable that the spirit of their communities unconsciously dictated their choices.

Let no one think the one civilization merely pagan, and the other religious. Both, it cannot be doubted, flow from the dictations of necessity. The first evidently is the order of littoral, scattered, primitively piratical, latterly trading populations dependent for survival upon individual initiative, like the Ionian Greeks, the medieval Italians, the Hanseatic people, the seventeenth-century Dutch and English. The second must be counted that of continental, pastoral, agricultural populations grouped and herded by the communal nature of their wealth. Possibly the one is essentially Protestant, the other essentially Catholic. In either case, both represent the results of the adjustment of religion to vital needs. And while no community can survive holding exclusively to the one or the other order, the attitude accented is of greatest significance.

Hence the ease with which communism established itself in Russia. Hence, too, the peregrination of these symbols out of Russia and their present appearance among us. They come as affirmations of order, as challenges to an uncomprehending world. Doing so, they reveal much of the Soviets' attitude toward abstract work, art, and symbolic expressions of all kinds.

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There has been much confusion about this matter in this country, due not a little, we suspect, to the sorry personal muddle of Michael Gold. We have been told of Soviet hostility to pure and abstract expression, even to pure science and mathematics. There is no doubt that Lenin had an undeveloped understanding of the symbol, and very bourgeois tastes in art and most of his successors have had little more comprehension of the immense practical importance of the product of the abstract search for value and reality than their fellows in other European and American government offices. Not only the artists, but the research workers in Russian physical laboratories as well, are said to find it difficult to get support in their apparently non-utilitarian labors. But through this collection of wonderfully preserved symbols of value and faith, and objects of excellent workmanship and quality, we get the clear sense that what the Soviets are beginning to look for is the symbols of their own order: the present Russia evolved from the past. And finding us at a time of pretty confusion about the American order, it adds another to the many vivid challenges they have given us.

PAUL ROSENFELD

Drama

Rosalba and Virginio

ELINOR WYLIE'S fragile and frost-blown romance "The Venetian Glass Nephew" (Vanderbilt Theater) has been set to music and adapted to the stage. Ruth Hale has dramatized it, and out of that dramatization Eugene Bonner has made what he calls a "little opera." The most significant criticism of it I can give I must borrow from two unknown ladies who sat behind me, having strayed somehow into this theater rather than into any other, from Chaplin to the Chinese. During a change of scene one of them said: "Queer thing, isn't it?" The other replied: "Yes—but see here. The program says it is based on a novel." "Oh." Both of them then sank back in resignation to watch a spectacle which neither hoped to understand. Neither had read the novel, so neither understood the opera. Nor was there any possibility that either should. The opera was difficult enough to understand for one who five years ago had read Mrs. Wylie's tale of Rosalba and her frangible white lover, and who remembered it as something rather to be admired, perhaps, than to be believed. For there was that about Elinor Wylie's work, whether prose or verse. If one did not admire it, if one did not find perfection of some sort in it, then there was nothing in it at all.

So a dramatization of "The Venetian Glass Nephew" would have either to be perfect or to fail utterly. The performance of which I speak was far from perfect. Of the music I can say little, except that it was tuneful and that it seemed to me much the best thing about the whole business. But of the rest I am bound to report that the dramatization missed every opportunity to be dramatic; that the acting—save for George Houston's as Casanova and, in lesser degree, Raymond Huntley's as Angelo Querini—was hesitant, indeed was almost palsied; that the pace throughout was sluggish; that in a word the illusion was not there. Without this illusion there could be no belief, and so no delight. Mrs. Wylie supplied the illusion in her book by supplying a constant glittering purity of style. With wonderful spirit she carried the thing off, stiffening us at once into an attitude respectful of her art and running the sentences of her text swiftly into one another much as water, one may imagine, runs in among the particles of sand and soda when glass is made. We could believe that tale. We cannot believe this spectacle, which lacks

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Hans Lange String Quartet, Carnegie Chamber Music Hall, Fri. eve., Mar. 6.
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even the sort of style which would make it credible in its own terms. Miss Hale kept the original language wherever she could, and that was fine—particularly when it came from the lips of Mr. Houston. But when Mary Silveira, who played Rosalba, walked out of the furnace at Versailles which supposedly had converted her into a porcelain wife to match her brittle husband, I could not see that she was any different from what she had been before she walked in. There was no music, no lighting, no pantomime, no style to tell us that she was.

Have you seen Ogu? He is an Indian in "The Great Barrington," a play at the Avon Theater which is so thoroughly bad that it is funny—but not funny enough, I fear, to last long enough for you to get there before Ogu is forever gone. Ogu is the funniest thing about the play, which Franklin Russell wrote with some intention unknown to me. The moral of the piece seems to be that we should not lean too heavily on our ancestors, who may, like the seventeenth-century Barringtons and Van Doorns here, have been lecherous liars and murdering braggarts. The twentieth-century Barringtons and Van Doorns are not aware of all this, and so come in for some ponderous blows from Mr. Russell's club, which he labels irony. His fancy, which weighs approximately ten tons, moves two sets of persons, one seventeenth-century and one twentieth-century, simultaneously about the stage, which fairly creaks with so much labor. But his inspiration was Ogu, who ogles a Dutch maid named Phoebe as no maid has ever been ogled, I am sure—saying it all, too, in four words which he repeats and repeats: "Ogu want Phoebe NOW." I thoroughly enjoyed the play, burlesquing it for myself as it went along. If those responsible for it would only call in George M. Cohan to burlesque it for us they might bring down the town. Otto Kruger as the Great Barrington is just as noisy as he needs to be.

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